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PORTRAIT
OF A LIBRARY

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To Help Trustees and Students of Library Work
Understand the Administrative Problems
of Libraries

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PORTRAIT OF A LIBRARY



Suburban Public Libraries

Anticipating a library's development through a study of civic factors. Differences in small cities which affect their public libraries. Differences in suburbs. Problems common to public libraries of residential suburbs. Obligation upon the library of the residential suburb to provide satisfactory library facilities in schools. Obligation to function with speed. Obligation to develop information service. Warding off obsolescence. Chief asset of the suburban library. Relation to special libraries in the city. Apparent competition offered the suburban library.

I

Suburban Public Libraries

Anticipating a Library's Development Through a Study of Civic Factors

IN this era of rapid change it is no longer possible to direct the destiny of a library system without a more complete understanding than formerly of such social elements as unemployment or adult education and such civic factors as regional planning or recreation. Like the church and the school, the public library is now an integral and essential part of the community; like them, its growth is the result of a series of cause and effect, of stimulus and response, of action and reaction.

Those internal and external forces which stimulate the growth of a community also create the need for a more extensive and complete library service. Not only are a competent librarian and staff essential but also library trustees and municipal officials who fully understand the rôle of the public library in the life of the community. It is the function and responsibility of the librarian to assist in the education of the trustees in their directing of the library and,

jointly, that of the librarian and trustees in making the officials who govern the town library-minded.

The future of libraries must be considered in terms of the changes and growth which may be anticipated not only in the community but also in the region as a whole. Changes, future developments and needs may best be forecast by the careful study of modern town and regional planning.

Coupled with this accepted interdependence of the library and society, the relationships of the suburb and the city present the basic problems of the suburban public library; a grasp of these relationships will prove essential in the wise solution of these problems.

*Differences in Small Cities
Which Affect Their Public Libraries*

THE communities in which town or small city libraries operate fall into two groups: the self-contained town, far removed from the influence of larger cities, and the suburban town within commuting distance of one or more large cities. The two communities may be of similar size, but there are outstanding differences which affect their libraries. The self-contained town is comparatively free to plan its development and to control its destiny; the suburban town is part of the growth of the larger metropolitan unit and

must harmonize its future development with the needs and plans of the entire metropolitan area of which it is a part. Located in a metropolitan area, no town can live unto itself alone, when many kinds of rapid transit and communication bring unprecedented urban services and advantages within easy reach. On the other hand, the self-contained town outside a metropolitan district is able to control its own destiny in far greater degree, its cultural centers lie within its own boundaries.

Another difference between suburban and self-contained towns is the degree of competition, a definitely activating force which accelerates the tempo of suburban life. This element of competition affects the libraries of suburbs in much the same manner as it does their business activities. The suburb has become accustomed to the advantages of the city. As a result, the quality of service rendered on the outskirts of the city is easily and continually compared with that obtained within its bounds. Competition for the patronage of its residents is correspondingly keen. This constant competition extends into many aspects of suburban life and is an important factor in the customary excellence of suburban public schools, hospitals, and churches. Competition is in part responsible for the improvement in library technique of many suburbs. It necessitates better planning and

extensive self-analysis to meet the unprecedented demands for increased service.

Removed from urban stimuli, residents of the self-contained community tend to be more complacent and easily satisfied with material which is not current; the same dilatory response to circulating ideas may be observed also in the administration of their libraries. The librarian has relatively little opportunity to confer with highly trained colleagues; the trustees of the library are less likely to assume the full measure of their responsibilities; and town governing bodies often fail to realize the importance of the modern public library as a social agency.

Library planning is, however, as essential in one type of community as in the other. But just as municipal planning in suburban towns is more complicated, so is library planning rendered more difficult by uncontrollable outside forces. Adequate service may only be secured as a suburb grows and changes, by maintaining coöperation between four groups—the town governing body, the Town Planning Board, the Board of Trustees of the library, and the library staff. Not only should this coöperation be complete, but it should follow a long-time program without interruption or indifference.

Differences in Suburbs

BETWEEN individual suburban towns well-marked differences are also to be observed. These differences in turn determine the relative importance of the local public library's problems. There is the essentially residential suburb, within commuting distance of a city, an example of which is Montclair, New Jersey, approximately five miles from Newark and fourteen from New York, with a population of 43,000. In this type of town many families derive their support from employment in the neighboring city, and those who work in the suburb are largely occupied in rendering personal service directly or indirectly to the commuter's family. If any industries exist, they are usually of no marked size or importance. The chief force in the development of the town and its institutions is, therefore, the competition of the city.

In contrast to the purely residential suburb is the town of the type of Paterson, New Jersey, with a population of 138,513, and sixteen miles from New York City, lying in the same metropolitan area, but operating factories and industries which influence the economic life of the town. The competition of the near-by city is apparent, but is a secondary and much less persistent force than are the industries. If such a suburb were transferred to another part of the state,

away from a metropolis, it would combine all the elements necessary to a self-contained town. Finally, there is the suburb of a suburb, such as Verona, New Jersey, two miles from Montclair, with a population of 7,161, a small community primarily residential, but subject to rural forces as well as metropolitan ones. Its library patrons are more scattered, and the forces of competition are slightly less severe.

*Problems Common to the Public Libraries
of Residential Suburbs*

At present, public libraries in residential suburbs vary greatly, in size of buildings, in quality of staff, in public support, and in book stock. The best of these libraries frequently provide effective sales arguments for agents in offering suburban real estate to substantial middle-class families. Parents know that the most progressive teaching requires books, books, and more books, designed especially for modern children. Householders want books and magazines among other elements of a home. The adult educational activities, clubs and discussion groups attracting many who desire friendship, culture, and recreation, are sustained by generous, well-selected supplies of books. Contact with the city has instilled in the suburban residents a knowledge of the best material and service. They have learned what a well-equipped, well-supported

public library means in terms of satisfaction and money.

To meet these demands the suburban public library must satisfy three fundamental obligations. Inherent in the library program is the obligation to assist in raising school-library work in the community to the highest possible level, since the quality of the school is an important reason for the continued residence of many local families. More insistent, though no more important, is the obligation to function with speed—speed in book selection and book purchase, speed in providing books for borrowers, and speed in supplying information.

Information service, as distinguished from reference service or research, is the suburban library's special province, and its third definite obligation. If properly developed, this service saves the library patron much time and effort in the city, while removing a burden of minor questions and references from the research services of city libraries.

*Obligation Upon the Library of the Residential
Suburb to Provide Satisfactory Library
Facilities in Schools*

THE residential suburb is by its very nature child-centered. Parents of young children are constantly moving from urban centers to give their children the

advantages furnished by suburban communities; they are careful to investigate the standing of the schools, libraries, churches, and other social agencies of the town in order to assure their children the best possible educational and social environs.

When a high standard of education is maintained by the schools of a suburban town, the public library must provide superior facilities for the school children. A broad and inclusive school curriculum, expanding along the lines of social units of work, stimulates the individual child to investigate innumerable types of information and to reach out for this information in answer to his queries. Therefore, the school library must have a correspondingly inclusive supply of books and other printed material readily available for every age and grade. If not, the parents will be among the first to recognize the failure. As members of the Parent-Teacher Associations and often as taxpayers, they will do everything in their power to make themselves heard and to change existing conditions.

In preparing budgets library trustees will be made aware of the pressure of public opinion on behalf of the children long before support is urged for other activities of the public library. Programs contemplating economies for municipal departments will omit "budget slashing" in respect to costs of library service

to school children. To finance school-library service jointly with The Board of Education appears to work the least hardship to library and taxpayer.

The Obligation to Function with Speed

THE obligation of the suburban library to function with speed has an immediate effect upon the technical organization of the library's work. All planning of the internal workings of the library must aim at "taking out the time lag" between processes. Efficient, trained librarians who serve the adult public directly must be on constant duty during the hours of library opening. In the making of library schedules, office work as differentiated from public contacts must be eliminated for a relatively large number of able assistants. Such planning results in an apparent subordination of the library activities for children to those for adults simply because materials and machinery for this rapid service loom large in the general library picture. A telephone switchboard and other mechanical devices which increase speed must be installed. Investment in indexes must be heavy, and librarians with thorough knowledge of their contents are a prerequisite. Extensive vertical file material must supplement the books, magazines, and indexes assembled for "ready reference."

The reasons for such intensive efforts toward

speed are inherent in the relationship of the suburb to the city. Life in a suburb takes its tempo from the city where fashions, even in ideas, are soon outmoded. Such swift changes in style are in turn accepted by the suburb and are particularly apparent to the suburban library in the rapid rise and decline in the popularity of individual books. In metropolitan areas, where book reviews are regarded as daily news, the public libraries must, therefore, place special emphasis on rapid decision about inclusions of titles in the book collection, on the purchasing of books, and on making information about these purchases readily available through the public catalogue.

The Obligation to Develop Information Service

THE information service which, with adequate publicity, soon becomes a feature of the suburban library's work must be distinguished carefully from research and reference work and even from the usual "popular reference service," long known and used, for example, by club women and extension-course students.

Such information service presupposes speed on the part of the librarian and a complete contribution of all her knowledge and training to the technical and bibliographical aspects of the patron's problem, and should be contrasted with the leisurely ferreting

out of information which used to be required of patrons of the smaller libraries.

In the information service of suburban libraries the aim should be to adopt the techniques used in business libraries, namely, to look upon the seeker of information at the public library just as the librarian of a business corporation regards a member of the firm she serves and to give him equally rapid and competent service. Interloan and coöperation with more highly specialized libraries in the vicinity should be an integral part of such service.

The rapidity of this service depends upon the coöperation of librarian and patron, and particularly upon the clarity and completeness of the patron's statement of his problem. By contributing her professional training to the mechanical aspect of an inquirer's problem, the librarian sets the amateur free to use all his effort on that part of the problem which he alone can solve.

When the suburban taxpayer realizes the value of a complete information service, he becomes an articulate supporter of an adequate library budget.

Warding Off Obsolescence

IN addition to the three fundamental obligations to its constituency, the suburban library should assume the responsibility of continually improving its ap-

pearance. The decorations, exhibits, furniture, and book arrangement of the suburban library are in such constant competition with the interest and color and often genuine beauty of the exhibits in city department stores and libraries that it is not enough to maintain high standards of cleanliness and ventilation.

Just how institutional may a public library in a suburb continue to be in appearance when the bulk of its customers are exposed to the interesting silent salesmanship of the most modern city department stores? The library building is also compared in the client's mind with his own suburban residence. The library should at least approximate in attractiveness the average home of the locality. At planned intervals, budgets in the suburban library should certainly include painting, new lineolium, new curtains, new lighting, new and different furniture. If necessary, landscaping and a new façade should be provided in those suburbs where depreciation of a neighborhood or plans for a civic center indicate that a new library building will be erected in another location within the decade.

The Chief Assets of the Suburban Library

IN a suburban town, librarians and library assistants of ability and background gradually come to rank

among the valued members of the community. They are regarded as leaders, and by invitation as well as by initiative they participate actively in community movements. This recognition of the librarian is substantially a recognition of the place which books have in these community activities. In a large city similar credit may go to the chief librarian and a few heads of departments, but the participation of the staff members in the larger formal movements in cities is, in general, not so direct nor creative.

Because the suburban library assistants are so closely connected with almost every community movement of importance, the book supply of the suburban library can be adapted directly and immediately to the demands of the ordinary citizen or his children. Many specific books can be ordered by telephone from city book dealers and made available within twenty-four hours. The number of copies needed and the extent of their use can be anticipated far more accurately and quickly than in a city library.

Among other assets of the suburban library is its friendly advisory work to general readers. In addition to the pleasing informality of the transaction, the actual recommendation of a related book is usually excellent because personal acquaintance outside the library between library assistant and reader is common, and a knowledge of the requirements and

the hobbies of the borrower enables the library assistant to suggest an appropriate book with few preliminary questions.

*Relation of the Suburban Public Library
to Special Libraries in the Metropolitan Area*

IN contrast to library work in a self-contained community or in a branch library of a great city system, the suburban library must think through its relations to special libraries in the metropolitan area, eliminate competition with them as much as possible, and strengthen all means of coöperation.

The suburban library should not be considered, as it has been too often in the past, a weak competitor of the metropolitan libraries, public or special. Instead it should be regarded as an affiliate, capable of turning valuable new business to the larger institutions and capable of relieving them of many routine transactions.

Before the suburban resident finally uses his local library wisely and automatically for the first stages of any reference problem, suburban libraries will need to advertise jointly that essential reference tools are available in every suburban library, that telephone service is available, that brief authoritative bibliographies can be furnished, that the suburban library can supply the generally known and generally

popular material on most projects and will supplement this service with books to be obtained through interloan, and that a letter of introduction to special libraries will be furnished to an accredited user of the suburban library after fundamental searches have been exhausted at the suburban library.

*The Apparent Competition
Offered the Suburban Library*

MONEY, taste, and nature have joined to make Montclair a desirable place of residence for families in the middle and high income groups. But in contrast to the palatial houses and the middle-class homes which presuppose home libraries and reading lamps, Montclair has a negro section, in which female domestics predominate, and a foreign district, separated geographically from the formal residential areas by a business district and by a county highway.

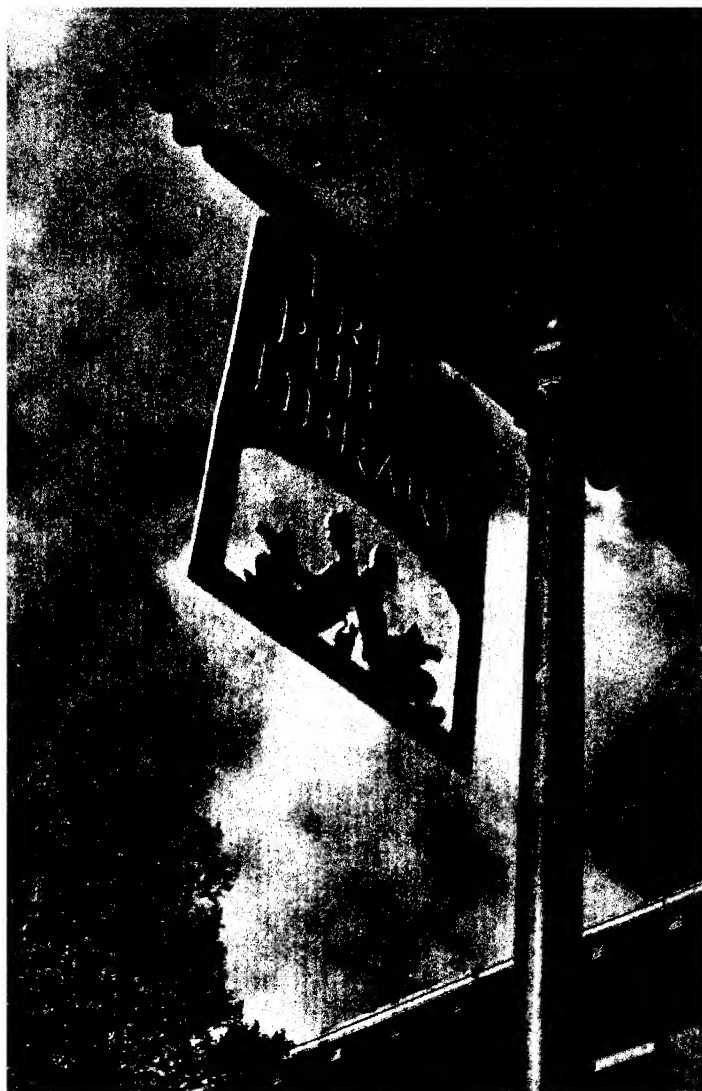
The above description holds undoubtedly for many other residential suburbs which have grown up in America's ninety-six metropolitan areas. The middle class in these suburbs may be depended upon to use the public library, but at first glance the two adult population groups, which are so widely divergent in incomes and in amount and use of leisure, appear to be unlikely clients for the public library. In one group the public library apparently must

recognize the competition offered by individual ownership of books, by circulating libraries and book-shops, and by the many forms of recreation and social life available. In the other group drudgery and poor reading habits are deterrents to the frequent use of the public library.

A question immediately arises as to what use, if any, may busy and well-to-do citizens be expected to make of the public library. Other questions frequently asked are: "Will a public library in such a suburban town be supported by the taxes of the well-to-do who probably buy many of the books they want, and will it be used by that small group of residents who want to read and who cannot buy books for themselves?"

Such questions, undemocratic as they may appear, are worth considering if they lead to the discovery of the library's unique place in the community's life and if they serve to redirect interpretation of the library. It stands to reason that the public library, no matter what competition it may seem to have, has a field distinctly its own in which to serve a genuinely useful purpose and to justify tax support. No matter how many owners of books there may be in the town and no matter how many other library collections are locally in active operation, the public library undoubtedly contains material which could

Informality characterizes the suburban public library service.



be used with satisfaction and pleasure by many persons who do not now know of its existence at the public library.

Any effort on a library's part to ascertain the activities and interests in a community which may compete with reading becomes automatically an effort to discover the fields in which the library should build up its book collection and intensify its publicity. From the library's point of view, all activities and interests may be enriched by reading.

To find the library's unique field and its potential users, the library staff must search out and list the library's sources of competition from other book stocks in the community, and it must discover the definite competition it receives from interests and activities other than reading. To this end it is recommended that a census of the public and semi-public book collections be taken by public-library staff members.

From such a census the public library not only takes the measure of its own strength, but knows potential sources for bibliographical advice and future consultants for enriching the library's information service. If the library at any time should be forced to curtail its book purchases, local sources from which many persons could still obtain reading matter would be known. If the community should be

forced to cut down its support of certain of the other book agencies in the community, this census would indicate roughly where mergers, agreements as to fields of service, and withdrawals from certain fields could advantageously take place.

Both as a policy and as a conviction, the suburban librarian should not look on any of the local sources of book supply as competitors of the public library, but should regard them either as stimulators of public-library use or as complements. The suburban librarian should maintain a similar attitude toward the vast supply of magazines and newspapers which come into the town with such regularity and frequency.

The depression has in many instances brought about a keener understanding of the suburban library's services. Many suburban residents are staying home, since their employment in the city has ceased or the money with which to shop is wanting, and such citizens are thus discovering the assets of the local library. At the same time "Citizens' Investigations," under a variety of names, have put suburban libraries on their mettle to improve their performance.

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Common Library Problems

A public library system instead of a single public library. What the library offers to the children of the community. Library service in the schools. The book collection. Weeding and storage. Special efforts to accommodate individual readers. Readjusting library policies as the suburb develops. Accepting the obligation to maintain information service. Building up a background for information service.

II

Common Library Problems

A Public Library System

Instead of a Single Public Library

THE narrative which follows of the Montclair, New Jersey, Free Public Library is a definite picture of a single suburban library in relation to its community. The present extent of the Montclair Library's participation in the recreational, cultural, and community activities of the town is set forth as exactly as possible. The mistakes, handicaps, and unfinished undertakings which have retarded the library's complete usefulness are discussed, and present strengths which appear capable of further effective development are described.

Care has been taken to recount only those activities which involve contemporary problems common to most libraries in residential suburbs and to avoid featuring those which are not generally applicable, so that librarians and library trustees of other suburban municipalities may have opportunity to compare their own experiences, problems of administration, and aspirations.

To any one of the 13,326 registered adult borrowers of the Montclair Library a few fundamental facts about the library are apparent, quite apart from any consideration he may give to the amount or quality of service he has received, or to the human relationships involved. First, the Montclair Library is a library system, not merely the outmoded and outgrown little red brick building just off the main business street. The library maintains a branch in a library-owned building and five children's libraries of various degrees of development in elementary schools. Children hold one third of the reader's cards and borrow 25 per cent of the books which the Montclair Library lends. The library maintains also an information department with five trained librarians to furnish facts, printed material, and lists of books on various topics as requested. For all these purposes the library has a book stock varying between 85,000 and 90,000 volumes in good condition, well selected, and kept up to date through systematic weeding, as well as through frequent buying. The main library is regarded as a reservoir of books to be drawn upon at any time and in any amount by the six other lending agencies of the system. Each branch library also lends books to other members of the system. Speaking in technical terms, librarians describe this form of administration as "fluidity of book collec-

tion," as "interbranch loan," or as "universal borrowers card." There is nothing new or unusual or unreasonable in such library policies; they involve the fundamental services which any citizen should expect his municipality to give to any resident, whether a taxpayer or not.

*What the Public Library Offers to the Children
of the Community*

"My child brings home some lovely books from school," a Montclair mother will often say, "and I notice the Montclair Library mark in them." Such a recognition of the library's service to the child is one of the aims behind the policy of book purchase. For the children as well as for the adults the library aims to buy books of high standard, to make decisions about including new children's books in the book collection with rapidity, and to buy generously of unusual books on the higher price levels.

Whether for children or adults, the library aims to supply a rich assortment of material and strives to make it conveniently and pleasantly available. In coöperation with the Board of Education, attractive school-library rooms are set up in elementary schools as quickly as funds permit and need arises, and are operated under contract.

In addition to the twelve public schools of Mont-

clair, the community supports six private schools and eleven nursery schools. Since the Montclair Library accepts as one of its fundamental obligations the effort to bring about superior school-library work in the community, it regards this obligation as applying to all the schools in Montclair, whether tax supported, private, or parochial. The library, therefore, operates on the principle that it owes all schools in the community certain services, each of which is intended to make the content of the school work richer and the goals of the school curriculum more quickly and easily achieved.

Wherever in a school there is a librarian, a teacher-librarian, or a clerk-librarian, the Public Library coöperates in every way to encourage, help, and inspire her. Such expert service as the Public Library is equipped to give is freely given. The Public Library lends groups of books to any teacher in any school under the same simple rules for all. The Public Library encourages visits of classes to the library building and plans to carry out the aim of these visits in any way the teacher desires. The library also coöperates with the schools in setting up various book exhibits in connection with the school curricula. Instruction in the use of libraries and story telling are two other basic services offered to all schools, whether public or private.

Library Service in Schools

At present, school libraries, public and private, in Montclair are in that stage of development which represents individualism in contrast to a unified plan. Every type of school library described in Fargo's *Program for Elementary School Libraries* now exists in Montclair. In some public schools there is no service except classroom collections of books and visits of children's librarians to classrooms. Elementary-school librarians are on the staff of the Public Library. The high-school and junior high-school librarians are employed and paid directly by the Board of Education and are responsible to the individual school principal. Certain of the elementary schools have school libraries operated jointly under a contract by the Board of Education and the Public Library. In other schools, packages of books from the library supplement a permanent collection in the individual school-rooms. In its effort to make its children's books widely useful, the Public Library loans practically all its books for children. For lack of room the Public Library has no central non-circulating children's collection of any importance. The private schools are gradually building up school libraries suited to their needs and employing enthusiastic and active teachers with some library training. The per-

sonnel of the school librarians (those in Public-Library employ, and those under the public-school system) has been the same for five years at least. In consequence an organization which may not be theoretically perfect works well because of friendly personal agreements among individual librarians of the schools and the Public Library.

The Book Collection

AFTER hearing the Montclair library system described as comprising seven outlets, eighteen professional, six sub-professional, and three clerical staff members, a fluid collection of about 88,000 volumes, and an annual circulation of approximately 425,000 volumes, a librarian may imagine with a fair degree of accuracy the extent of the Montclair library services and its annual budget. Such a description, however, gives no adequate picture of the quality or suitability of the books which are the stock-in-trade nor of some two hundred periodicals which enrich the book collection and keep its information up to date. For librarians who are interested in the technicalities of planning and molding an effective book collection the two policies which have controlled the quality of the net contents of the Montclair Library will, therefore, be outlined.

The maintenance of the book stock requires two

different techniques—one concerned with book buying and the other with systematic book elimination. In general a book is bought after two tests are applied: its contents must be needed; its title must appear on some accepted list. This is true even of the books ordered in advance of publication. With few exceptions, other books added have been personally inspected and found suitable for a special library purpose by the book buyer or another member of the staff.

When a magazine title is considered for inclusion in the library's subscription, it must meet a test similar to that applied to books. It must either serve an obvious local need, or its contents must be indexed regularly in one of the standard periodical indexes.

The methods used in buying books are described in detail in Chapter IV and in the Appendix.

Weeding and Storage

SOME by side with the rapid and continuous adding of books to the library (at the approximate average rate of 700 volumes a month), planned weeding of the book collection goes on systematically. This weeding is especially radical in the fields of technical and business books and pamphlets. The replacement list is reduced to a minimum. In general, older books

must justify their tenancy on the open shelves by being able to show that they are analyzed or referred to in standard library tools. Space in the main library has been at such a premium that the shelves open to readers must be cleared of books which are seldom used or whose use cannot be stimulated.

In attempting to divide the active books from the partially inactive, the library first attempted to find space for infrequently used books in parts of the various library rooms not open to the general public, where shelving space is not at such a premium. For five years the library shelved this constantly increasing collection, first in one out-of-the-way place and then in another. The volumes in so-called live storage finally exceeded 12,000 in number. They were scattered in four buildings as well as in several different rooms.

It was then decided to concentrate the scattered volumes in a single area which would correspond to loft space in a district of cheap rents. For this purpose a basement room in a school building was eventually loaned by the Board of Education. All books not in general use in the library system are now assembled in this room, and all gifts received by the library which are not added immediately to the collection are housed there also and treated as a second reservoir collection for filling occasional book

orders and interloan requests. The library maintains a daily messenger service to this storage room. In order to know without delay whether a book may be found in storage, the book cards for the volumes in storage are filed at the information desk at the main library.

In a library which has for many years maintained a single book collection entirely on open shelves without a reservoir for the less popular and less used books, the process of segregating a large part of the book collection consumes many months. The cost for manual labor alone is heavy. In Montclair the process of weeding out the book collection and making attractive the sections available to the public covered a period of seven years and still leaves room for improvement, owing to the obsolescence of the main building.

Special Efforts to Accommodate Individual Readers

THE administrative practices and policies previously described differ in no marked degree from those which might activate a public library in a self-contained town of similar size. The effect of a suburban location upon the library is definitely noticeable when it becomes necessary to consider the library's field of activities in terms of the whole metropolitan area in order to estimate the potential demands of

local library patrons, and to determine policies of book selection and information service under these conditions.

The department stores of New York and Newark have, of course, developed suburban service in a great variety of ways and have made purchasing by long-distance telephone simple and pleasant. Owing to her experience with the metropolitan department stores, many a Montclair housewife expects the Montclair Library to furnish parallel services with perhaps a small charge for special accommodation. Consequently, in addition to the fundamental public-library services the Montclair Library carries on certain auxiliary services at the instance of its users, particularly its women patrons.

The Montclair Library has so far been able to maintain at its end of the telephone a variety of services which correspond to the store's "personal shopping service." It has been able to "send on approval"; it has been able to build up a sales force where individual staff members take special interest in the individual customer. It sends out notices of new books to patrons who are interested in some special type of book material, just as department stores send out notices of sales to selected lists of customers. Following the Bon Voyage package advertising of the shops, the library will mail to its

vacationing members assorted packages of interesting books; it will "charge and send" without the presence of the borrower at the library; it will renew by telephone. The Western Union acts as the agent of the library for the delivery of books to homes at a charge of ten cents per package, collected and retained by the messenger.

For a small fee, specially requested titles owned by the library but not available at the time of the request will be located and reserved for the borrower. Special books not owned by the Montclair Library will be borrowed from other libraries.

Readjusting Library Policies as the Suburb Develops

THE chronological development of the Montclair Library illustrates the changes in administrative policy which many suburban libraries either have faced or will face as the growth of the community forces corresponding readjustments in the library. In the thirty-one years since the main Carnegie Library was built, the population of Montclair has grown from 13,962 to 42,107.

For many years the major emphasis of the Montclair library staff was placed upon the machinery of lending books as distinguished from those services which aim to bring book and reader together. Effort was always made to order new books rapidly. Many

were chosen on Monday morning on the basis of reviews in Sunday's New York newspapers. The city's book-stores and book reviews were influencing the suburban library even in its early days.

Twenty years ago a branch library building was built with Carnegie funds. This branch carried on a good lending business with no high lights and no setbacks. The library felt similarly obligated to establish small library branches in other localities in the course of time. Two were set up in settlement houses, another in a small store. These efforts did not show satisfactory results and were later abandoned. A relatively small number of adult persons in each neighborhood borrowed the books; inquiries for information were infrequent; children borrowed books and eventually grew up and transferred their interests elsewhere.

The larger part of the work of the library assistants was on the clerical level. Poor tax support of the Public Library may explain why competitors arose in the form of junior high-school libraries, generous collections of books in classrooms, rental libraries, and libraries such as those operated by volunteers in the Mountainside Hospital, in the Junior League Community House, and in a branch of the Young Women's Christian Association. Gradually the Public Library activities in the poorer sec-



tions of the town dropped off and were closed out as not justifying the expenditure of money or effort. At the same time the use made of the two regular library buildings increased. As contrasted with a circulation of 253,000 volumes in 1926, the lending of books reached a total of 458,000 volumes six years later. Effort was then made to take the major emphasis from circulation and to build up a service which would utilize more fully that part of the library's stock-in-trade which was lying relatively idle on the shelves—the large and generally excellent collection of non-fiction. The first step was, of course, to provide informal “advisers,” constantly in attendance.

The children's room at the main library was turned into a sample room for advice to teachers and parents. Lending of books to children, of course, continued there, but this was not its main purpose. The room itself was also greatly reduced in size owing in part to the needs of other activities. At the same time there was instituted the plan to decentralize direct service to children and to place such service in adequate school libraries. By strengthening the branch personnel and buying new books more rapidly and in larger quantity, effort was made to deflect from the main library to the branch library the patronage of many adult book borrowers who lived in the vicinity of the branch about two miles distant.

*The machine takes away fatigue and
creates a friendly atmosphere.*

As the book fund improved, the figures of circulation grew proportionately.

What may be called the renaissance of the Montclair Public Library began at the municipal building. The Mayor in 1926, on examining the library's proposed budget, concluded that the amount requested must be too small for thoroughgoing and effective operation of a town institution of the library's potential importance. He based his opinions on previous personal experience as a trustee of a great special library.

At that time both the Mayor and Board of Trustees were doubtful whether the library was rendering the fullest service which might properly be expected. Some kind of impartial analysis was, therefore, held to be essential as a means of judging its efficiency and of determining whether the community was receiving all that it should. The Board of Trustees decided such an analysis could best be obtained through the medium of an outside surveyor. After a complete study by a qualified library expert it became possible to recognize in what particulars the library was failing to give full value and in what particulars it should be strengthened and altered. Such a survey of the Montclair Library was made in 1926 and became definitely responsible for much of the progress which has been made during the ensuing

years. There was now something stable to which to anchor all future procedure. The one hundred and fifty dollars which it cost was the finest conceivable investment and represented the beginning of progress from an outgrown village library toward one with regional implications and services.

As a result an operating budget of \$45,368.53 in 1926 (the minimum of one-third of a mill of the assessed valuation of property, as prescribed by the New Jersey State Library Law) increased by logical annual amounts until in 1931 the total library budget reached its peak of \$88,933.66, or \$2.11 per capita. In 1935 the budget was \$72,196, or \$1.71 per capita.

*Accepting the Obligation to Maintain
Information Service*

AFTER having obtained the first increase in the library budget, the Board of Trustees aimed to expand the services offered by the library. This plan contemplated broader service to school children and the addition of a well-equipped reference department. The ultimate development of a children's department in the Public Library is sketched in the section of this chapter headed "Library Service in Schools."

The assets which were responsible for such reference work as the library was engaging in at this time

were the good will and active patronage of certain women's organizations with study-club programs, the genuine interest in certain phases of the library's book collection on the part of persons who had fostered the library during many years, a rich collection on the subjects of furniture and antiques, and a basic collection of outstanding, older reference volumes. The liabilities lay chiefly in the limited periodical list, the unevenly developed book collection, and the small number of professionally trained staff members.

With systematic interpretation to the public of such assets as the library then had and with continuous generous buying of reference tools, more persons used the library and used it more often. Gradual steady pressure for accuracy and swiftness was accompanied by the addition of well-trained librarians with a variety of talents. In the course of time all clerical tasks were gradually eliminated from the duties of certain experienced assistants so that their entire time and effort could be devoted to the steadily increasing information service.

For the past three years the number of information questions answered by the five reference assistants at the main library has averaged more than 60,000 per year.

With a library building as crowded as the present

main library, methods are constantly sought to serve borrowers adequately without their coming to the library and thus to prevent further congestion. In consequence the "extra-mural" use of the library by telephone has been steadily urged by the library with excellent results. Library publicity whenever possible has carried the following statement:

"Because of the crowded condition of the library, you may prefer to telephone for books and have them delivered to your home, at a nominal charge of ten cents."

Information questions coming in by telephone alone have increased in seven years from an unrecorded number of not more than 1,500 a year to 9,636 in 1934, exclusive of 4,285 inquiries over the private line from the branch library. The total costs involved in this telephone service were approximately equal to the salary of an additional information assistant.

Building Up a Background for Information Service

THE cumulative plan used for buying reference books is outlined chronologically here:

The purchase of the titles given in the *Suggestive List of 100 Reference Books* in *Mudge's New Guide to Reference Books*; next, the gradual purchase of all

books except those of purely local value listed in the *Queens Borough Branch Reference List*; next, standing orders for all publications of the American Library Association and the H. W. Wilson Company; then, the development of a collection of 229 periodicals around the six outstanding periodical indexes; then, emphasis on the purchase of year-books and continuations.

Since the publication of the *Vertical File Index*, it has been possible to supplement the book and periodical collection extensively with timely or unusual pamphlet material. This additional source of information generally has the virtues of being inexpensive and written in popular style. The present reliance of the information service in the Montclair Library upon this type of material may be judged by the records of 1934. In that year, for example, 7,196 pamphlets and clippings were added to the information file to which inquirers have access, and 867 pieces were discarded as superseded. The net contents of this file on December 31, 1934, were 36,696 items, constantly in use.

The library is still small enough to make it happily possible for an information worker to draw with speed on the entire book collection, whether the book needed is strictly a reference book, is on the regular open shelves, is in the children's room,

or even in the catalogue department in process of being added to the library.

Recently reference purchases have taken cognizance of the library's ability to locate material in the immediate vicinity with a reasonable degree of speed. In consequence the library has been working to provide various substitutes for regional shelf lists. So far the Montclair Library has:

1. Catalogue cards in the main public catalogue of all books in the Montclair Art Museum, a half mile distant
2. A union list of some 680 magazines in 32 public and semi-public institutions of Montclair, and the terms under which these magazines will be loaned
3. A union list of the newspapers on file in all libraries within a ten-cent fare of Montclair
4. A record of the holdings of the subscriptions of local banks to financial services, such as Moody's
5. The Granger and Granger supplement holdings of seven public libraries in the vicinity.

A reader who is not adequately served at the Montclair Library, or who believes that all material at his local library has been studied, does not need to take the long trip to New York only to find that he may not borrow books in the city library to take home, or that the collection he really needs to examine is

in another building perhaps several miles away. If given the opportunity, the information assistant will direct such an inquirer to the special library which best suits his need and equip him with time-saving bibliographic references.

» III «

The Share of the Trustees

The Board of Trustees' share in the library program. The local tax budget and the library. The library's relation to the Town Planning Board. The library's relation to other town offices.

III

The Share of the Trustees

The Board of Trustees' Share in the Library Program

THE members of the Board of Trustees in the Montclair Library are public servants, acting in a capacity of trust, as the term implies. They are volunteers, appointed without civil service or political requirements. They are citizens chosen by the Mayor to perform an important service without compensation for a period of five years. Each year the term of one trustee automatically terminates, but such trustee may be reappointed. The Mayor and Superintendent of Schools are ex-officio members of the Board of Trustees and attend practically all meetings of the Board.

The first responsibility of a trustee is to understand thoroughly his functions and responsibilities. It is almost as important for him to realize what he is not supposed to do as to have a clear conception of his duties. His period of initiation and training is, therefore, most important and is not left to chance. Recognizing these needs, no trustee is appointed to

the Montclair Library's Board of Trustees unless there is definite evidence that he will assume his duties with an eagerness to understand the theory and principles of library development, and unless he will sacrifice time and energy to absorb the vast amount of knowledge required for a competent library trustee.

It therefore behooves the President of the Board of Trustees to cultivate such relations with the Mayor, who has the appointive power in Montclair, as will ensure the kind of appointment the Board of Trustees needs. If the President has such relations, the Mayor will discuss the matter at the end of each year and will ask advice as to the reappointment. This places a great responsibility upon the President, the Board of Trustees itself, and the librarian whose combined judgment thus becomes practically responsible for the future guidance of the library. In the main, no one is recommended who potentially is not capable of becoming a competent President. The needs of the Board of Trustees are studied to determine what assets are most lacking, and how competent the proposed individual may be to interpret the library to the people of the town. In no case is an appointment made merely because the person is popular or well known in the community, or because he is a good personal friend of a trustee or town

commissioner. It is felt that a trustee should be free to make the library his foremost public activity and should not be so engrossed in other social service that the library may represent a secondary interest. A live, well-informed, broad-minded Board, with a keen interest in books, people, and public relations, is equipped to give to the community a wise and satisfactory library service.

The foremost responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are the appointment and support of a head librarian who can and will lead, who is capable of commanding the respect and loyalty of the staff, and who will be recognized by the patrons of the library as an authority, both competent and fair. The Board of Trustees recognizes the need and importance to the library's progress of the librarian's attendance at state and national conferences and ensures the funds to meet the necessary expenses involved.

In the internal administration of the Montclair Library the librarian is of more importance than the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees guides the broad policies and assumes legal responsibility for the efficient operation of this tax-supported institution. The Board of Trustees here is equivalent to the Board of Directors in a corporation and does not concern itself directly with detailed management, which is held to be the function of the librarian.

The Local Tax Budget and the Library

THE Montclair Library has found and is developing five special provinces, which are outlined fully in Chapter V. Some of these provinces are still in an elementary stage. To develop them further and systematically, the library needs particularly a financial plan which the town's appropriating body will approve in principle.

In the general tax picture of the Town of Montclair the Public Library holds a very small place. At the peak of the library's tax appropriations only $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the local tax budget was devoted to the library. In Montclair there have been no bond issues for any library purpose with consequent debt service to be added to the true cost of the library. The two Public Library buildings and the ground upon which they are built were not purchased from tax funds nor through bond issues, but with gifts from Andrew Carnegie and interested citizens and with money from fines. The capital investment in the Public Library of Montclair at the end of 1933 was divided as follows:

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| Grounds | \$28,500.00 |
| Buildings | \$86,500.00 |
| Equipment | \$24,105.76 |
| Books | \$103,339.79 |

Before it was possible to assume successfully the real duties of trusteeship, it was essential for the Board of Trustees to have a long-range program which would afford to the tax-appropriating body a clear conception of the future needs and aspirations of the library. Such a program created an opportunity to measure the annual progress of the library towards the established goals and greatly simplified the preparation of the annual budget. A five-year program, developed for the Montclair Library in 1929, has been indispensable to the Board of Trustees ever since, even though its complete fulfilment has not been realized.

The minimum allowed by the New Jersey State Library Law for operation of the Montclair Library in the year 1934, would have been \$35,558. The actual 1934 operating costs were \$63,933. If appropriated, the maximum permissive library tax of one mill on the assessed valuations would have been \$106,674, an amount which would have permitted the Montclair Library to increase its staff, its work space, and school libraries sufficiently to undertake the simple plans now listed as ideals.

Even though the library's annual budget is at present less than \$80,000, the responsibilities and difficulties of justifying and obtaining the necessary tax support call for accounting and planning of the

first quality. The most obvious reason for such accounting and planning is that there must be a continual reinterpretation of the library's needs and aims to the tax-appropriating body as the personnel of this body changes.

Under the Walsh Act in New Jersey the Commission form of municipal government assigns the public library to the Department of Public Affairs. In Montclair this town department is in charge of the Mayor who annually reappoints or appoints one library trustee for a term of five years.

The attendance of the Mayor of Montclair at Board of Trustees' meetings affords an opportunity for a steady and direct contact between the Board of Trustees of the library and the town commissioners. This relationship also permits the Mayor to become a competent interpreter of the library to his fellow commissioners, and to present trustee points of view to his associates. The presence of the Mayor at meetings gives confidence to the other commissioners that the interests of the town as a whole are kept sufficiently before the Board of Trustees.

The Library's Relation to the Town Planning Board

ANY zoning law which tends to concentrate or scatter certain groups will in turn effect the library's clientele. The findings and predictions of the Town

Planning Board are, therefore, of great helpfulness to the library in making plans for future branches and future service to schools and citizens.

When the Board of Trustees decided to propose the erection of a new main-library building, the advisability of using certain sites was discussed at length with the Town Planning Board. The possibility of including the library in the municipal center was carefully studied coöperatively. Eventually it was agreed that the library should not be a part of any other building in the proposed municipal center, but instead should be housed in a building of its own. The site finally selected was one to which the Planning Board gave official approval. That the building has not as yet been built because of the depression does not invalidate the great usefulness of the Town Planning Board to the library in making this and other decisions. The few years' delay in the erection of the new building may be responsible for selecting some other site if a municipal center should be projected simultaneously. In that case the same principle of close coöperation with the Planning Board would hold.

The estimates of the Town Planning Board indicate that future increases in Montclair's population may reasonably be expected to be concentrated in the vicinity of the only branch library building belong-

ing to the Montclair library system. Translating this expectancy into library terms, we find that ultimate enlargement of the branch must be considered.

Fortunately the site of this branch is of such generous dimensions, the construction is so substantial, the design so simple that if the anticipated population increase in this section should make the present space in the branch-library building too small for reasonable service, an addition may be made easily and successfully. Slowly, carefully, and systematically, therefore, the library must enlist public understanding looking toward the financing of such an addition probably within the next decade.

Relationships with Other Town Offices

ONE of the most valuable contacts which the Board of Trustees and the librarian have is that with the Town Counsel. His advice and legal opinion are sought frequently. Although he does not attend meetings of the Board of Trustees, the relationship is such that he is practically an additional trustee, whose legal opinion is available without charge. In speaking of the library the Montclair Town Counsel expressed the matter, "Good management bespeaks forward looking, painstaking care. Such a policy presupposes intimate, constant, and cordial relations with a legal adviser."

"The man charged with the responsibility of guiding a municipal corporation amid the complexities of modern statutory law should in fairness have a chance at a preview of any proposed action, rather than to behold, to his consternation, a fully developed plan fraught with difficulties, publicly projected. Public libraries, like other municipal corporations, are closely circumscribed by statute, having only those powers which have been expressly delegated to them. To know those powers and to keep within them is the plain duty of anybody charged with library administration."

The library's purchases are made through the town's central purchasing office in the municipal building, although the New Jersey State Law does not compel nor suggest such an arrangement. The buying of the library's books is by agreement exempted from this centralized purchasing plan, since it is recognized that the purchasing of books for libraries is a highly specialized business in which the ability to make proper decisions may produce decided differences in cost.

❧ IV ❧

Present Policies

Present policies relating to the library's participation in the community's life. Policies of administration including staff organization. Policies regarding records and practices. Present policies relating to book buying. Present policies relating to plant and structures.

IV

Present Policies

Present Policies Relating to the Library's Participation in the Community's Life

IT is a matter of sincere conviction on the part of the Board of Trustees and the staff that the library has a definite recreational function and that the circulating of fiction and such other printed matter as will provide recreation is consequently a right and proper undertaking to carry on. The library recognizes too that it is a force for adult education. The library also looks upon itself as a social agency and in consequence accepts membership in the Montclair Council of Social Agencies as a valuable obligation. It participates officially in all outstanding community activities, provided they are non-partisan and non-controversial. It is a matter of policy that these social relationships should be accompanied by systematic publicity, the purpose of which is to interpret the services, uses, value, and needs of the Montclair Library. An integral part of the library's program is to stimulate, particularly in

children, appreciation of beautiful printing, illustration, and bookmaking.

*Policies of Administration
Including Staff Organization*

THE responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are regarded to be:

To determine the policy of the library

To promote its service

To secure adequate funds to carry on its work satisfactorily.

In the Montclair Public Library, the provinces of the Board and that of the librarian have been differentiated as follows:

The librarian shall be the chief executive officer of the Board of Trustees and as such shall be responsible for the administration of the Public Library under the general policies approved by the Board of Trustees. She shall be directly responsible to the Board of Trustees and through the Board of Trustees to the community. She is the equivalent to the president of a business corporation.

The librarian shall attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees, shall serve as clerk of the Board at trustee meetings, and shall have the right to speak on all subjects under discussion but shall not have the right to vote.

The librarian shall have charge of all properties belonging to the library and shall be responsible for the proper discharge of duties by all members of the staff.

No one shall be appointed to the library staff, promoted, transferred, or assigned to duties except upon the recommendation of the librarian.

All communications or petitions from the employees to the Board of Trustees shall be transmitted through the librarian, who shall have the right of recommendation when the communication is considered by the Board of Trustees.

This last policy puts into black and white an ethical principle which is occasionally not apparent to all assistants. In the Montclair Library it has contributed directly to the high level of morale and the fine friendly working relations between the librarian and the individual staff members. It has also been responsible for much of the *esprit de corps* behind the Staff Association. Nothing serves to iron out friction as much as the recognition of the need to discuss matters fully and the right of the librarian to hear any case before it is brought to the trustees.

Policies Regarding Records and Practices

ALL the professional assistants are fully instructed in the policies of the library. One of the tenets of

the library's administration is that these assistants shall have great freedom to make responsible decisions in carrying out the details of these policies, except in the matters of buying books, of placing orders for other purchases, and of writing letters where a problem of good will is involved.

Each complaint which has to do with fundamental policies is answered in writing by the President of the Board of Trustees.

All records, with the exception of the minutes of the Board of Trustees are open to any responsible, accredited person.

The administrative assistants of the library strive to make as continuous and as generous contributions as possible to the field of librarianship. These contributions it is realized are relatively insignificant. They consist chiefly in serving on state and national library committees, in placing the Montclair Library's records and experiences at the disposal of other librarians, and in placing books and enthusiastic coöperation at the disposal of neighboring libraries. To make such contributions is held to be a continuing obligation.

Present Policies Relating to Book Buying

THE Trustees take no part in buying books. They are on record as opposed to the principle of censor-

ship and leave this function to the librarian. The library purposely buys books on both sides of subjects about which there is a dispute. Every effort is made to represent both sides adequately by the best printed material obtainable.

A book is not accepted as a gift unless the right is reserved to dispose of it later as seems best from the library's point of view.

In the Montclair Library, as in all public libraries, complaints are received from individuals who are dissatisfied with the library's choice of books. The molding of the book collection has been singularly free of such instances, however. No pressure by individuals or groups to control or modify the book collection is on record.

The townspeople accept the library's decision on inclusion and exclusion of titles and subjects. The intellectual caliber of the bulk of the population has been largely instrumental in bringing about this freedom, and the Board of Library Trustees through periodic statements dating back over many years has been responsible for sustaining it.

The Montclair Library buys practically no books on approval. Usually it is possible for the book buyer and certain other staff members to have arrived at a satisfactory conclusion about the usefulness of a book within a week after its publication. The aim is to

arrive at such conclusions in advance of publication date, especially when books likely to become very popular are involved. Inspection of the books in New York book-shops by the library's book buyer completes the process of rejection or purchase.

Once a week the book buyer takes the library car to New York and examines books at the shops. She makes immediate decisions and returns to the library with the bulk of her purchases. The books most in demand are in circulation and recorded in the public catalogue by the following noon.

The Montclair library staff is unanimous in believing that it is better to make available many copies of one good popular title than it is to buy several titles for which there is only a slight demand and which are of only passing interest.

Present Policies Relating to Plant and Structures

THE Board of Trustees is definitely committed to the erection of a new main-library building to replace the small building now thirty-one years old. The experience of the Montclair Library has been that as the twentieth year in the life of a library building approaches, the structure becomes obsolescent. Costly physical replacements in wiring, heating, and ventilating, for example, have been necessary, and the serviceability as an efficient library plant has

declined as library techniques have improved and changed.

In regard to branches, it is the policy to decentralize as far as possible library work with children and establish in coöperation with the Board of Education adequate, attractive school libraries in each public-school building. The library is postponing consideration of the establishment of branches for adults in view of the likelihood that a main-library building will soon be erected. It is hoped that with the aid of automobiles, telephones, and other mechanical means which are in fairly common use among the adults of Montclair, the proposed new building can be made to serve adults until radical population changes take place.



A Long-range Program

Formulating a long-range program. Services which the Public Library only is offering in Montclair. The limitations of library publicity in suburban newspapers. A cumulative publicity program. Setbacks and consequent changes in publicity. The materials of successful library interpretation.

V

A Long-range Program

The Procedure of Formulating a Long-range Program

ONE of the greatest benefits of a long-range program is that it compels the Board of Trustees and the librarian to look ahead consciously to settle matters of policy which otherwise would be permitted to drift and remain unsettled and unsolved. Also it helps the staff immeasurably by giving them confidence and a vision of the progress they are helping to create and the goals they are striving to reach. Such conditions are productive of ambition and the desire to attain, and should be regarded as indispensable factors in the management of a library. They take the place of sales quotas in modern business and serve as fundamental incentives in activities which deal so essentially in intangibles, with nothing for sale other than circulation, information, and good will.

Toward a long-range program the procedures which have been found particularly helpful by the Board of Trustees of the Montclair Public Library

are an outside survey, a five-year program, a survey by local citizens, and the creation of a Citizens' Committee. A library should progress satisfactorily and gain public confidence and reasonable tax support if operated with these advantages.

The procedures which have helped the administrative staff most to formulate a long-range program have been the defining of those services (listed in the next section of this chapter) which the library alone among local institutions is equipped to give, the decision to concentrate upon developing these services, membership in the Council of Social Agencies, a cumulative publicity program, the making of various analyses of the library borrowers and of their demands, and the organization of a formal staff association.

If the Public Library wishes to be indispensable in Montclair, the administrative officers of the library and the assistants also must know exactly what special book services the library offers or can offer which no one of the other book-distributing agencies in Montclair supplies systematically or is equipped to supply. It must see that each expenditure by the library of effort or of money serves to strengthen the features in which the Public Library is not to any extent duplicating the work of the other book-distributing agencies in the town.

*Services Which the Public Library Only
Is Offering in Montclair*

THE Montclair Library has found that it maintains five services which for all practical purposes are not being offered elsewhere in Montclair. In aiming for a high standard of accomplishment in each of these five fields, the Public Library is not duplicating, to any appreciable extent, the main purposes of the other local book collections. The services upon which the Montclair Library is therefore concentrating are:

Supplying general information as readily and as thoroughly as possible from printed matter

Furnishing a large and varied collection of periodicals rendered useful through indexes

Giving information about books themselves, their prices, their publishers, their contents, estimates of their usefulness in given instances, etc.—in general, what may be termed the bibliographical side of library work

Giving information about the resources of other libraries in the town and in the immediate vicinity, including the special libraries of New York

Making new books available in great variety within a few days of publication.

In stressing only these five particular features,

the Public Library does not imply that all or any of the other services usually emphasized in public libraries are better performed in Montclair by agencies outside the Public Library. Other agencies simply happen already to be occupying an important part of the other fields, as reference to the book census (Chapter VI) will show. Whether certain of these agencies will tend to merge with the Public Library or should tend to merge depends ultimately upon financial support and upon the part laymen will eventually take in the development of the library's program.

*The Limitations of Library Publicity
in Suburban Newspapers*

FROM the point of view of library publicity, the newspaper situation in this suburban city is radically different from that which a library may expect in a city of similar size not dependent upon a metropolis. In other words the eyes of countless Montclair daily newspaper readers will seldom light upon a news item about the Montclair Library, because the papers which Montclair library patrons or possible patrons read most frequently, the New York journals, cannot reasonably be expected to carry copy about the suburban library's activities.

Although it has a large circulation each night in

*Readers are attracted by generous
buying and systematic weeding.*



Montclair, the Newark *Evening News*, published eight miles away for consumption throughout northern New Jersey, of necessity can accept only brief news items about the Montclair Library and an occasional feature story.

On the other hand, the Montclair *Times*, a biweekly with a circulation of over 9,000, may be expected twice a week to publish some part of the copy which the library sends to it, if the material has news value, and to be especially generous with space during the summer, when library news is regarded as a good local "filler." However, the local editor, because he has no competition, could at his option, shut off the supply of free space given to the library. The library publicity must, therefore, always be planned in such a way that it will continue and be effective even though newspaper support and space might suddenly cease.

In any description of the Montclair Library's efforts to arouse the interest of the townsfolk in library management and to attempt to keep the interest of the townsfolk in the library, it would be unfair to represent the library's administrative practices as always meeting with complete favor, even after intensive publicity efforts. Along with the present type of interpretation used by the Montclair Library, undoubtedly the library needs interpreting

of a different kind based on individual interests. The exact form which will be most successful is not as yet clear. Such experience as the Montclair Library has to guide it indicates that a personal letter or a leisurely personal conversation is much more efficacious here than speeches and talks before groups.

A Cumulative Publicity Program

THE interpretation of the library is concerned with aims, with ability to render technical library services, and with books. The emphasis changes from year to year as limitations in service are slowly erased and as the library's holdings in certain classes of books are gradually strengthened. The media of library interpretation outside the library walls are not only news items and feature articles in the local press, but exhibits of books, talks by staff and Board members, printed circulars of many different types, and word-of-mouth advertising by friends of the library.

To create confidence in the library is the primary aim of all the library's efforts at interpretation. If the library is weak in any regard, publicity in this field must be postponed until the weakness is eliminated and this phase of the work is functioning smoothly and speedily. The library's publicity must, therefore, confine itself at any given moment to the services or books which the library is thoroughly equipped to

produce upon request or to news items which tend to build up good will and respect for the library.

The interpretation in the transition period from 1927 to 1935 followed a cumulative plan and used most of the forms of advertising customary among libraries. Every week some definite though simple activity toward this end has been undertaken and completed. Each year has had a single large aim toward which it was intended that all the weekly advertising should contribute. In the first year a librarian with experience in planning and carrying out library publicity elsewhere was added to the staff. The major part of the campaign throughout the year was concerned with obtaining more news space for the library in the newspaper. Any item of library news which implied change and improvement was sent to the local paper in a form ready with headlines for final editing and in a style patterned closely on that of the newswriters. Advisory service to parents and children was stressed. Story hours and talks before organizations and school assemblies were also part of the first year's advertising program.

In the second year the book collection had been increased by purchase to such an extent that the advertising of actual books in the library was the base of the program for the second year's activities.

The third year was devoted chiefly to interpreta-

tion of such services as the library then stood ready to render, and of the various ways to use the library without delay or inconvenience. Interviews with staff members about their special duties were published systematically in the *Montclair Times*. By this time the news and feature articles about the library in the *Montclair* paper had been so developed that they were probably yielding all the results that could be expected from a single local biweekly newspaper.

In the fourth year, when the library had reached a point where a campaign for a new building was in sight, interpretation of the library's needs became an obligation requiring the active participation of the Board of Trustees.

It became their difficult problem to ensure a coherent steady flow of word-of-mouth publicity on library matters, other than through the local press, of consistently interpreting the library's aims and needs to the people, and of keeping these aims and needs before them. The publicity was reviewed by an outside expert with advertising and library extension experience.

Since the Board of Trustees' proposed five-year plan was predicated on increasing financial support of the library, publicity was therefore redirected with a new audience in mind. A library Citizens' Committee of 250 persons whose judgments and opinions car-

ried weight in the community was created at that time. Acceptance of service on the Citizens' Committee was indicated by signing a statement which read:

"I shall be glad to serve on a committee of citizens who will assist the trustees of the Free Public Library to obtain a much needed new central building for the Town of Montclair."

The chief obligation which was thus assumed was to influence friends favorably toward the proposed building whenever occasion permitted.

The method used to give these persons a thorough understanding of the problems of the local library and its value to the community consisted in sending occasional bulletins whenever matters of serious moment to the library have arisen.

This list is representative of every interest in Montclair—racial, religious, and social. These citizens have become the active interpreters of the library to their friends. Through this process the townspeople as a whole are kept conscious of the library, and their sympathetic understanding of the library is ensured.

Setbacks and Consequent Changes in Publicity

WHEN the financial program of the town necessitated "an economy administration," all formal plans of the Board of Trustees to urge a bond issue for a new library were by resolution held in abeyance. Auto-

matically it became necessary to change the entire trend of the publicity from the need for a new building to the need for fair support, and to present to the taxpayers and the tax-appropriating body adequate information about the needs of the library and its special value in the time of depression. Through the Citizens' Committee the library's relations to the town government were made a matter of wide public interest.

Publicity directed at the general public, as distinguished from the library's Citizens' Committee, next concerned itself with making the most of such assets as the library already had, and with discovering and stressing ways by which a library user could himself contribute toward a more rapid solution of his problem. Attention was centered particularly on the information service. Individual reference works and collections of books of outstanding importance and interest were widely advertised. Readers who could write good publicity and who had used the library with great satisfaction wrote feature articles and letters to the editor of the *Montclair Times*. Various aids to self-service were inaugurated, and provision was made so that the inquirer could state his problem with ease and examine his material leisurely.

An elaborate organization of book exhibits, both inside and outside the library, was inaugurated to

acquaint readers with the extent and high quality of the book collection. By 1935 a single exhibit outside the building would often feature several hundred books. An assistant, competent to give advice about the contents of the books, accompanied the book collection and set it up in an attractive, interesting fashion. Typical exhibits of this sort have been 150 books on dogs, exhibited at the Town Clerk's office during the week that dog licenses were renewed, a room fitted up with reading tables and books at a demonstration house remodeled under the government housing plan, and examples of free or inexpensive material on rock gardens, shrubs, planting, and similar topics displayed at the Garden Club Show. Standardized exhibit equipment reduces the labor.

Publicity which attempts to describe the special assets of the library is now giving a picture of the collective strength of the libraries in the vicinity. For example, during the past year, the Glen Ridge, Bloomfield, and Montclair Public Libraries, located within four miles of each other, and the Montclair Art Museum have published jointly articles on topics such as hours of opening, work with children, and collections of mounted pictures. In each article the four libraries have been treated as a group. These articles have appeared simultaneously in the three local papers. The copy has been written jointly and has the advantage

of presenting to readers a complete picture of library facilities within a convenient area.

The results, statistically speaking, of the Montclair Library's continuous planned publicity are hard to gage. At the end of 1934 when the Montclair Library compared its accomplishments for the year with the standards set by the American Library Association for cities of the size of Montclair, there were three points in which the Montclair figures were slightly above the standards determined by the American Library Association. Instead of a circulation per capita of 9, the library's circulation was 9.88. Instead of having 2 books per capita, the library had 2.10 volumes. Instead of having 40 per cent of the population as registered borrowers, the Montclair Library had 48.2 per cent. How much of this was due to planned publicity and how much to adequate book funds cannot be stated.

The Materials of Successful Library Interpretation

To convey the possibilities of the local public library's value to the citizens of the town would seem the greatest challenge the publicity of the suburban library must meet. Human interest stories and case records which are not confidential and testimonials from satisfied library users are the best materials for successful interpretation. Such "copy" is difficult to secure since



a reader is usually either unconscious of the influence a book has had upon him or is reluctant to discuss it. When data of this kind can be obtained, it is difficult to present in ways which are not sentimental or trivial.

The number and names of books and articles written by local authors who have obtained help from the library in preparing their work is of good publicity value. The statistics customarily assembled by libraries, such as the amount of information service, of "circulation per capita" and "circulation per registered card holder" merely show penetration of the community by the library. They are not sufficiently vivid and arresting to create greater appreciation of the potentialities of a public library in a modern community.

Publicity for successful library interpretation in Montclair needs greater variety and greater development than can at present be given it from within the library organization. In any consideration of ways in which laymen might contribute to the effectiveness of the Montclair Library's service, this problem of adequate and effective publicity presents itself immediately as an appropriate field for lay activity.

*The telephone speeds up information work
and improves its quality.*

❧VI❧

The Library's Clientele

Where the borrowers live and work. Montclair residents without library cards. Buying best sellers and their kin. Amount and variety of information service. Attempting to reduce operating costs. The cost of lending books and the cost of information service compared. Government aid to the pay roll.

VI

The Library's Clientele

Where the Borrowers of Books Live and Work

IN this non-industrial town, 5,551 residents commute daily to a neighboring city. Recently an information librarian looked up the business connection of each borrower of the first ten books about banking and found that the majority of these borrowers were employed in New York. Evidently the local Public Library was proving serviceable in that group of books which would seem more logically to be obtainable directly through business connections in the city. Montclair non-commuting wage earners work chiefly as domestic servants or in small shops. In some 500 local retail stores there are 2,000 employees, not many in comparison with the number of stores nor with Montclair's commuters.

From a spot map of library borrowers it was learned that there is at present at least one Public-Library book borrower living on each block of Montclair's one hundred miles of streets. Nearly all children from seven years of age upward have library cards.

The evenness of the present distribution of library-card holders, as evidenced by the spot map, makes it difficult to predict the direction of future library extension. These facts serve to indicate the importance for the library to have advance information of town-planning trends. Housing developments and new zonings will disturb the present general library penetration and will result undoubtedly in changes in the volume and kinds of reading matter requested.

For example, any modification of zoning regulations in Montclair which permits the erection of more apartment houses will undoubtedly add to the number of borrowers who will be interested in fiction and who will expect from the nearest Public Library fiction service which approaches that of the rental libraries. One or two room apartments require less housekeeping and therefore create more leisure for reading.

Montclair Residents Without Library Cards

THE present even distribution of borrowers represents in the percentage of the population holding library cards the standards accepted by librarians as normal when they attempt to judge a library's penetration of its community. Publicity efforts in Montclair to extend library service may, therefore, be considered to have achieved satisfactory results. From the

point of view of coverage as distinguished from quality of library service, the statistics seem to justify the effort behind the publicity.

The results of library publicity may normally be expected to be revealed in quantity rather than in quality. Quality is the result of the competency of the staff and the adequacy of the books and other tools which are available. Quality is a reflection of what happens within, after the publicity has exercised its chief function of enticing a reader to the library.

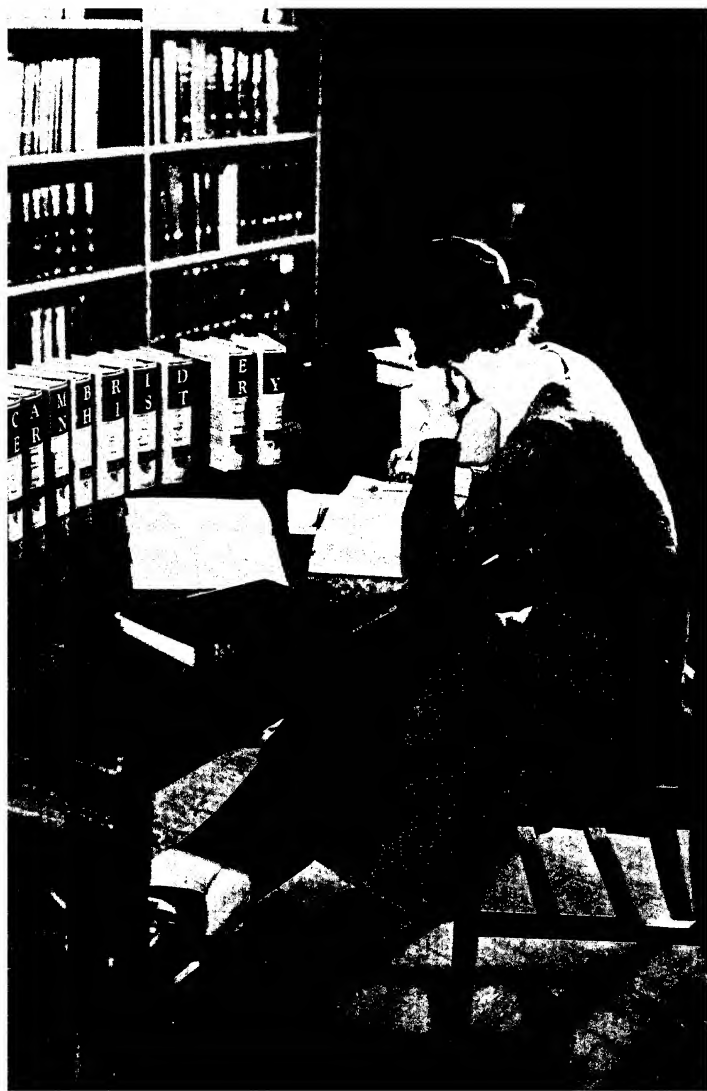
The Montclair Library doubts whether the figures of registration and borrowing mean much more than that some 20,253 scattered individuals have received accurate information or pleasant recreational reading, especially since one-third of these 20,253 are below senior high-school age. Almost 52 per cent of the population do not borrow books from the public library. A fundamental problem in connection with the library's present registration is: Are the leaders of Montclair being supplied from the library with information which may in turn influence a large number of persons? If so, then many of those without borrower's cards may receive benefit from the library indirectly. Lists of Montclair residents who may be considered leaders in the community have, therefore, been compared with the library's registration files. The result of such comparisons are given:

| Group | Number of members in entire group | Number of mem- bers holding library cards, or relatives in the same house holding library cards |
|--|--|---|
| College Woman's Club..... | 312 | 324 |
| Who's Who in America, 1934 | 132 | 100 |
| Officers of 317 Montclair Or- ganizations | 900 | 421 |
| Other key people, including teachers and ministers..... | 1,013 | 415 |
| | <hr/> 2,357 | <hr/> 1,260 |

As soon as these facts were secured, the library attempted to learn whether those who stay away from the library entirely have access elsewhere in the town to an adequate number of books. A census of public and semi-public book collections in Montclair was then made by Montclair Public Library staff members, who found that the minimum number of books in all Montclair libraries and bookstores on June 1, 1934, was estimated at a total nearly 200,000 volumes, or almost 5 to each inhabitant. To every two volumes owned by the Public Library there were approximately three books available elsewhere in the town, exclusive of books in private homes.

Different members of the staff according to their

*Abundant reference material frequently
eliminates trips to the city.*



interests and duties visited the various book collections, examined them in great detail, and obtained official estimates from the managers of the institutions and stores. The many small collections of books in banks, business houses, and churches were omitted from this record of reading matter available to Montclair residents, as were also the daily papers, the 2,700 pounds of magazines arriving in Montclair daily, and the 9,000 metropolitan newspapers each Sunday. The ownership of books was found to be divided as follows:

| | VOLUMES |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| In the Public Library System | 84,672 |
| Belonging to Board of Education | 60,000 |
| In State Teachers' College | 30,000 |
| In the three book stores | 10,000 |
| In libraries of five private schools | 7,000 |
| In the four leading rental libraries | 3,000 |
| In Montclair Art Museum | 1,500 |
| In the seven club-houses | 1,300 |
| In the three hospitals | 1,000 |
| In second-hand book stores | 1,000 |
| In the Christian Science Reading Room | 275 |
| In Town Departments | 100 |
| <i>Total</i> | <hr/> 199,847 |

With the exception of the fiction rental libraries and the Public Library, practically all of the other

Montclair book agencies have a budget limitation or red tape of one sort or another which prevent rapid purchase of new books. Some of these libraries can buy but once a year, some twice. One or two have had no income at all for a long period.

These statistical findings indicate that the library, though rich in the newer books so much demanded, must now use methods of interpreting the library which are much more personal than those of the past few years. A competent staff and a diversified Board of Trustees, both encouraged to interpret the library among their own groups, will in the course of time have a definite success in bringing books and appreciative readers together. Securing membership on committees for able staff members is another desirable method of library publicity ranking almost equally with frequent exhibits of books and with personal letters.

Buying Best Sellers and Their Kin

THE heavy demand at the Montclair Library for best sellers and for other books which are new and talked about is due not alone to the leisure of many Montclair residents but in large measure, the library staff believes, to the influence of the city, where the window displays of book-stores and the book reviews are both forms of news.

The library must place its order for many books, particularly works of fiction, well in advance of the date of publications in order to make them available promptly inasmuch as new books are requested repeatedly by library borrowers as soon as they are favorably reviewed. The number of duplicate copies of new novels and of popular new non-fiction (such as *Life Begins at Forty* at the time of its publication) purchased for the collection of the Montclair Library depends on advance information about the quality and contents of books to be published. In Montclair to build up a series of practices which will ensure such advance information is one phase of the suburban library's obligation to function with speed.

Good books which are likely to be popular are duplicated freely. The number of duplicate copies which were formerly purchased has been considerably reduced by using the Western Union to deliver books which have been "reserved." Soon after a "reserved" book is returned to the library building by one borrower, it is delivered by Western Union messenger to the home of the borrower next on the waiting list of persons who have specially requested it. By greatly reducing the time a popular book is not actually in the possession of a borrower, the library is now able to satisfy the demand with five copies where eight were formerly necessary. One out of every hundred

books loaned to adults is "a reserve." Even though the charge for reserving is ten cents instead of the two cents customary in many other libraries, the service is very popular. During 1934 the Western Union delivered 3,076 packages of reserved books, at no cost to the library, the borrower paying the ten-cent delivery charge directly to the messenger.

A few of the Montclair Library's purchases are enumerated here to show how library supply and anticipated demand for new books from a registration of fourteen thousand adult readers are coördinated:

The advance orders and purchases through the first month after publication totaled for Hervey Allen's *Anthony Adverse*, forty-eight copies, for Edna Ferber's *Cimarron*, fifty copies, for Anne Lindbergh's *North to the Orient*, seventeen copies. Whenever there are five names on the waiting list for a desirable new book, the purchase of one additional copy is automatically considered.

Amount and Variety of Information Service

THE Montclair Public Library's present policy in regard to its information service is to furnish adequate information rapidly and to inject into the answer as much advisory service about books as is possible so that the inquirer may be encouraged to read further on the subject involved. The usefulness to the com-

munity of the bulk of this information service at the Montclair Library has been questioned in a few instances. The charge upon the payroll of staff members whose whole time is given to furnishing information in response to direct inquiries has also been queried from time to time when possible reductions in cost have been studied. Thirty-nine per cent of the library's total budget goes into financing this service.

As yet the Montclair Library has no yardstick for measuring either the cost of answering questions of different sorts or the usefulness of this information service. It can only state that its information-service policy and the activities growing out of this policy are based on the belief that a tax-supported service which saves the individual citizen either money or effort is justified, provided that it is not competing with a legitimate business or profession. An inquirer provided with the proper information is to be regarded not only as a client who has found the library adequate but as a citizen satisfied with the service rendered him by the municipality. It is by such processes that culture advances to a higher level.

Trends need to be studied by a statistician. The Montclair Library has made some studies of the intensity of the work of the information assistants and some which report the satisfaction of the reader, but these must be regarded as efforts toward improved

technique rather than as evidence that the present policy is justifiable.

The policy can only be supported by illustrations. It seems doubtful whether proof is possible. The present volume of inquiries in Montclair (64,580 during 1934) is small in comparison with the ideal which the library world has set for itself, namely, "the diffusion of knowledge." It should be recorded that the Montclair Library, chiefly through lack of funds, has had no opportunity to show the use to which the reference service could be put if the borrower or the inquirer were served as intensively as are the clients in a special library, such as that of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company or the Missionary Research Library. This is particularly true of the collection of technical and business books, including valuable financial services which are now used steadily with little guidance from the librarians.

To test the quality of the information service provided, as contrasted with the value to the individual or to the community, is, however, possible. Among tests are those of the up-to-dateness of the material, the authenticity of the materials, the amount of use made of books, magazines, pamphlets, pictures, maps, and the use made of the various library tools such as indexes, bibliographies, and year-books which are not known to the average reader.

Attempting to Reduce Operating Costs

IN 1932 when it was important in every municipality to reduce the costs of government and services, a Citizens' Committee in Montclair was appointed to survey the needs of each tax-supported department and institution of the town. A committee of five prominent citizens was appointed by the commissioners, one individual selected by each commissioner, to serve without pay and to scrutinize every function of municipal government performed and the costs entailed. This consequent survey of the library was of great benefit for it served to bring before the people the fundamentals of library service and crystallized in the minds of the Board of Trustees and the staff the real duties and functions which they were performing. The benefits derived were so obvious and desirable that if a municipality has not been so surveyed, it would seem worth while for a board of Trustees of a library to request a similar survey to be made. It forced the trustees and the whole personnel to pause, to take stock of themselves, and to be definitely analytical of methods, services, and procedure, to compare costs, and to evaluate the services which had been regarded as important.

Operating costs were reduced through a series of self-studies covering the financial practices and reports, the routines of the catalogue department, the

conditions and rules under which the staff works, the administration of the branch, retirements, a proposed reorganization of the staff, and physical rearrangement of work areas.

In an effort to carry a 10 per cent increase in volume of service with the same budget total as that of the year before, the library staff in the year 1932 analyzed those activities in which a mechanical process occurred in sufficient quantity each day to justify the purchase of a machine to perform this work.

Those tasks were then sought which outsiders could perform more cheaply than could members of the regular library staff. In delivering packages, duplicating typewritten figures beyond the fourth copy, marking numbers on back of books, collecting overdue books from homes, in photostating one or more pages of printing which otherwise would have to be copied by a typist, in multigraphing, in addressing envelopes to members on the Citizens' Committee, and in the care of library lawns, gardens, hedges, there were savings possible through letting out the work. A commercial artist makes the notices and signs.

Staff duties and responsibilities were studied, and physical strain was greatly reduced in consequence. The "time lag" between processes was shortened. Specially successful savings were made in the routine of



furnishing information, in the "interbranch loan," in cataloguing new books, and in reserving books.

In the winter of 1931-32, the information assistants began to feel that they never quite completed a task and that they were far more exhausted physically before the day's work was ended than was normal. The assistants involved then decided to make a study of their own work, to see if they could find out whether they were performing tasks which might just as well be omitted entirely or be done as cheaply either by mechanical means or by untrained workers, and whether work was distributed wisely as well as fairly among the different assistants.

For one week each information assistant kept a record of the time she spent at information tasks. At the end of the period it was discovered that an undue amount of time went into answering questions which might never have been asked if signs in bold letters had been placed in the library at strategic points. It was found, too, that a system of bells, buzzers, telephones, and a messenger in the magazine stacks could eliminate from the professional worker's tasks a good deal of waste motion among the stacks on different floor levels in the mechanical search for books. It was also learned that the work could be greatly simplified by some system of winnowing the very simple questions which dealt chiefly with library routine from

*The youngest student believes in
"research" at his school library.*

those which involved any considerable search in books or card catalogues.

It was found also that personality traits and tastes of the library assistants were often controlling factors in the distribution of tasks. Finally it was clear that the books themselves were not arranged in positions in the library which fitted the kinds and frequency of the use made of them. Many books examined often by a number of persons were not as near at hand as those less frequently handled. The floor space was not assigned to the different groups of books in proportion to the traffic through it; the book shelves were not in proper relation to the position where the reference assistants were stationed.

While this self-searching was proceeding, the confusion and the press of work upon assistants and the criticisms from the public about overcrowding at the library came much too thick and fast. At this point an offer of professional services came from one of Montclair's citizens who is an efficiency engineer. Simultaneously government-subsidized workers were assigned to the library.

The findings made by the library staff under the direction of the efficiency engineer became the beginning of a complete physical rearrangement of the main library and of a redistribution of duties among the staff. The accomplishment of the physical rear-

rangement took the better part of a year and a half. Modeled on that of the Youngstown, Ohio, Public Library, the staff reorganization of the Montclair library system did not result in an increase of the payroll, but it did change responsibilities and duties to ensure that within the year a somewhat smaller and better organized staff would be carrying more work.

The outstanding principles of the scheme of the staff reorganization are those of the transfer of staff members from one point in the system to another with great frequency and rapidity as need may arise, and of reduction in the number of department heads.

*The Cost of Lending Books
and the Cost of Information Service Compared*

IN the lending of books it developed naturally that divisions were gradually drawn between professional services and the various clerical tasks. Eventually all the professional services, such as advice about books and the use of existing bibliographies, were transferred to the shoulders of the professional assistants who make up the information staff. Mechanical means were employed to make clerical tasks more simple and rapid. The chief purpose of every change was to relieve the crowded conditions at the main library and make the library users as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

The information process tends to become more expensive as the ideals for this service grow and as ways of insuring more complete satisfaction are developed. In an effort to compare the costs of lending books with the cost of maintaining the information service for the year 1934, it was found that 36 per cent of the library's budget went into the lending of adult books and 39 per cent into the information service. A detailed statement of the methods by which these costs were evolved may be found in the appendix.

Records during the same period showed that 310,198 books were loaned to adults, and 64,580 questions for information were asked. If the number of books loaned to adults during the year 1934 were divided into the cost of carrying on the lending service, the answer would be seven cents per book. If the number of questions answered during the year 1934 were divided into the cost of information service, the answer would be $38\frac{1}{2}$ cents per question. It may not be concluded with any truth that the real cost of lending a book to an adult was only seven cents, because any guidance which might have been given in the moments previous to the actual borrowing of the book are charged against information. It also may not be concluded with truth that the average cost of answering a question is $38\frac{1}{2}$ cents, inasmuch as no count has been kept of the many persons who

were able to answer their questions for themselves by using the various tools with which they are familiar. It may also not be concluded that in case of dire tax necessity one function might be dropped with a proportionate saving in tax expenditures. Comparisons of the total costs only should be made, and then they should be used primarily to show to what extent clerical help may function successfully, at what point a professional assistant is absolutely necessary, and how the talents of professional workers may be utilized to the full.

Beginning with 1933 when the effects of the depression first began to show in the library's tax support, the amount appropriated in Montclair for the Public Library has been growing less, while services rendered have increased. These services have been carried on with no apparent decline in satisfaction to users. That there is any great virtue in such a showing waits to be proved. It would have been impossible without the presence of many individuals whose salaries were not part of the library pay roll. It must be demonstrated that the standards of service and staff health have been maintained, that costs have been reduced, that *esprit de corps* and staff morale continue to be high. If mass production methods have been employed in lending books, they should release assistants to make the advisory relationship

with borrowers more understanding, personal, and prompt.

Government Aid to the Pay Roll

THE government-subsidized service should be given a money value and added to the pay roll for a true picture of the library's costs. It should also be recognized as predicting the additional staff required to operate an efficient library.

During the year 1934 the various government-subsidized workers provided the library with 29,337 hours of work. If it were estimated that this force was only 50 per cent efficient, owing to lack of knowledge of library technique, handicaps of various sorts, and the great loss from labor turnover (since this time was distributed among 125 individuals) the library must have received from the government-subsidized workers the equivalent of the labor of eight competent, full-time workers for a year. When this help ceases to be available, there will exist a serious problem in administering libraries whose demand for services has greatly increased during depression times and whose tax-supported budget has decreased.

»VII«

Unfinished Projects

Problems most likely needing intensive effort over a decade. Measuring satisfaction. Progress reports. The knitting together of the professional staff. Staff opportunities for new experiences. A few challenges. What membership in the local Council of Social Agencies means to the library.

VII

Unfinished Projects

Problems Most Likely Needing Intensive Effort Over a Decade

SO far the Montclair library administration has failed to bring about the consummation of three major plans. These are the erection of a new main-library building, the rendering of adequate service to all schools, and the establishment of retirement pensions. That these plans are not already accomplished facts does not mean that they were unsound in principle, or that they cannot be accomplished eventually. They are pointed out here chiefly as indications of problems representing delayed accomplishments in the life of a suburban library, needing patient and intensive effort extending in some cases over a decade.

Not all of the Montclair Library's services and materials are used to their full extent by Montclair citizens, for example, the interloan service from neighboring libraries, the picture collections, and the publications especially useful to municipal offices. Not all of the library's services are understood, for

example, the extent and quality and up-to-dateness of the collection of reference books, the smoothness and efficiency of the reserve system. In two of the less prosperous sections of the town the library has from time to time attempted traditional substitutes for branches, but has been forced to look upon the results as failures. The conclusions to be drawn are that the library was not only offering the wrong quality of service but the wrong kind of service to persons designated as underprivileged or non-readers. The failures probably came because the library tried to make them readers of library books. A problem still unsolved is to discover what the library may have, if anything, which will be appealing and useful to them.

Several of the library's failures and difficulties cannot be explained merely because of "the depression." In this group are the absence of systematic work with churches and the library's hesitation to assume active leadership in local adult education. In such cases it appears that an increased staff would have furthered the project in hand and have improved its quality, although possibly some of the library's present interests and undertakings should be minimized to permit greater development of these more recently recognized needs.

Five years ago, the Montclair library staff of

twenty-five full-time librarians was apparently adequate for the service demanded of it from the community, and its book fund was satisfactory. In the meantime the community has recognized and made known its need for other services which demand from the library much additional advice and effort of high professional caliber. The experiences of the Montclair Library in this period with unfinished or unsatisfactory community contacts add testimony to the prediction that library budgets will be constructed on new formulas, with great changes in the present relative weights of budget items. The amount for personnel in the Montclair Library could reasonably be increased fifty per cent at present. Where the library staff formerly wished for bond issues for a fine library building with atmosphere and beautiful approach, there is now substituted the conviction that a building which is merely convenient, economical to operate, and pleasant is sufficient if a staff which is strong professionally and at least twice the present size accompanies it.

On behalf of library administration, it proved especially valuable when trustees, librarian, and staff jointly evolved a policy and placed its implications and aspirations on paper. This was done at the Montclair Library with its "proposed five-year program." Whether the policy continues to work after

several years does not detract from the current value of the program. In Montclair, the soil has only been scratched in the library's coöperation with local adult-education programs. The readers' advisory service is based only on a desire to seize each opportunity which comes to hand and to suggest interesting and valuable books or articles about the given subject. There are as yet no techniques, no forms, and no policies concerning adult-education work. The library acknowledges the need for developing the use of books in foreign languages, but for such a service it has no real plans as yet and little knowledge of the true extent of the needs. Black is not black, and white is not white in a picture of the Montclair Library's policies in these and in other respects.

The library has not yet revised nor faithfully continued the first five-year program. Its attempts to secure cost data, to gauge satisfaction to clients requesting information, and to test the quality of other services have not led to definite conclusions. Undoubtedly in the course of time, studies and recommendations made on a large scale by the American Library Association or in library schools will point out the local way to achievement.

Can Satisfaction Be Measured?

THE Montclair Library is now at a point where it contemplates developing a technique and a set of standards which have little to do with the number of books borrowed, but instead are concerned with finding out how nearly satisfactory in each case the service has been. The human element naturally makes a vast difference in the answer to each case, but it is perfectly possible to take certain counts in the course of the day's work as it is at present organized and later analyze the results. The facts are now either not assembled at the Montclair Library or are not on hand for a period of time sufficient to draw valid conclusions. Analysis of such counts ought either to improve the quality of the present service or furnish accurate and interesting material for interpreting some of the library's values to the community.

The Montclair Library needs to find methods of recording the uses to which library material has been put and the relative satisfaction therefrom; for example, whether a pamphlet containing material which had not yet appeared between the covers of a book was satisfactory, how often some visual aid, a picture or a postcard or a map, served the inquirer better than a statement in printed words, how often both sides of a question were suggested so that the

reader made his own judgment. Some record should show whether the library continued to furnish the borrower with more material on the subject from time to time and whether the borrower later turned again to the library for other types of books or information.

A count which would be useful is one showing the number of times inquirers or their questions have been referred to the special libraries of the metropolitan area. Still another count which would have value is the number of special collections of reading matter which have been assembled and placed on a "reserve shelf" at the request of a definite group of readers, so that members of the group and their acquaintances may refer to these books, magazines, and pamphlets. Examples of such collection are ones on the city-manager plan, pro and con; on birth control, pro and con; on subjects connected with the local Economics Forum; books to help teachers present poetry to young children; books on social planning for a community; books to teach negroes pride in the achievement of their race.

The Montclair Library is groping for methods of interviewing borrowers which will eventually give the library the various statistics mentioned above. The readers' advisers of the country in a few years will probably contribute such statements of experi-

ence and such results of trials of different kinds of technique as will give to the Montclair Library and libraries like it entirely new ways to judge the efficiency of its work. Out of these new records should come new and effective proof of the usefulness of the library.

To date the Montclair Library has failed to utilize to any conspicuous extent the wealth of instances of satisfied clients—and of failures to satisfy—which have come to hand. It has not had a chance to prove what it could do even by the addition of a full-time research worker or a full-time publicity worker with a budget for publicity. To make an experiment of any importance or duration has not been financially possible in the past three years. The Montclair Library has placed emphasis upon greatly increased advisory service outside the library walls through extensive book exhibits. Under certain conditions both book borrower and librarian feel that the result is more pleasant, more leisurely, and more generally satisfactory than is now possible in the main library building.

Progress Reports

THE following undertakings begun at different times during the past eight years are continuing to show valuable and cumulative results:

The survey of the Montclair Library made by Dr. Samuel Ranck, librarian of Grand Rapids, at the request of the Board of Trustees

The formulation by the Board of Trustees of policies concerned with the relations of the staff and the librarian to the Board of Trustees, and of the staff to the librarian

The formulation by the Board of Trustees of a salary schedule

The various small studies aimed at rendering more satisfaction to clients using the information service

The use of volunteers

Purchasing of indexes in great variety

Extensive efforts to profit by affiliation with special libraries

Ten years ago librarians in Montclair had practically no professional standing in the community. It has been a long and slow process to change the general attitude of indifference and often of intellectual snobishness to one in which the librarians are recognized as trained members of a profession with much to contribute to community movements and to local educational and cultural activities. Methods used to bring about local recognition of librarians have been: service on committees and consistent attendance at each significant small community group meeting by an individual member of the staff, chosen for her

personal assets to the meeting under way; systematic publicity for the various forms of professional responsibilities and recognition which have come to the Montclair Library and its staff members, for example, service on American Library Association committees, visits from library schools, practice work given to library-school students, and visits from distinguished members of the profession who have come to examine some phase of the Montclair Library's work.

The Knitting Together of the Professional Staff

THE workers in the Montclair Library have been chosen deliberately for their widely differing experiences and backgrounds. The equipment of all professional workers is good in so far as a general knowledge of books and an ability to meet library patrons are concerned. Each professional assistant has assets enough to act as a readers' adviser on some one topic. Each has a hobby or a specialty growing out of her previous background, experience, and predilections. As a result she watches a certain section of the book collection to be sure that it is added to and weeded. When a request or an opportunity for advice is received, the assistant who knows most about the subject acts as the connecting link between book and reader.

Partly because the depression has not permitted the usual movement of librarians from one institution to another and partly because outstanding staff members are genuinely interested in participating in a library which shows growth and improvement, the staff turnover has been small. The library has profited greatly in consequence from this absence of turnover. Enthusiasm, loyalty, and growth in knowledge of the library's needs have increased. The library has also had an opportunity in the sporadic supplements to the staff through the addition of government-subsidized workers, to glimpse the volume and quality of work which would be possible if the staff were greatly increased by competent trained assistants or by clerks who could turn out work of standard quality and quantity. A formally organized staff association has evolved during this period and has shown a threefold value in promoting both social and professional standards and in taking from the librarian many of the small burdensome details connected with personnel, much as a student association functions at a college. *Esprit de corps*, expressed in determination to render service of as high a standard as it is possible for the library to give, has done much to establish public confidence in the abilities of the librarians. Participation in Council of Social Agencies activities gives to staff members a sense of

belonging to the community, a feeling essential to the suburban library's development.

Staff Opportunities for New Experiences

A SCHEDULE which provides one full day off each week for each staff member has been of considerable indirect assistance to the library, in permitting library workers to go to the city in a leisurely fashion, enjoy it to the full, and bring back to the library new impressions, new ideas, and new information to be demanded by clients who are also influenced by the city. The museum enthusiast returns with pamphlets and pictures for the information files. The assistant who enjoys department stores attempts to incorporate in library exhibits some of the interesting features of displays she has seen in the shops. In consequence of the weekly full day off, the opportunities for each professionally trained staff member to keep up on the phases of library work in which she is interested are practically unlimited. Among them are the "Special Libraries" meeting, lectures, visits to other libraries, expositions such as the Business Show, exhibits, and discussions by groups in allied lines, such as the book clinics of the American Society of Graphic Arts, and the infinite variety of special libraries and bookshops in the metropolitan area. A full day's holiday also permits library assistants in suburbs to explore the

neighboring countryside, with a consequent enrichment of the library's collections on rural life and local history.

A Few Challenges

As has been stated earlier, the atmosphere of friendly welcome, service, and the sense of permanency in the relations of client and librarian are among the chief assets of any library in a residential suburb. In Montclair the informality of the overcrowded old main-library building with its jumble of furniture of various periods and types has in addition helped to break down the feeling of institutionalism. The congestion in this building, however, has placed an undue amount of emphasis in the schedules of the staff upon changes and shifts to release material for readers or to make working conditions easier. The sickness records have been showing a steady increase which may be explained in some measure by strain, fatigue, and the minimum of rest-room and staff-room facilities. The good features of working in an obsolescent building are summed up in the statement of an ambitious assistant, "It is splendid training. It is another case of 'all of which I saw and part of which I was.'" The library has been forced by the very inadequacy of the main building to develop services which have proved of special interest to the staff.

Rapid library service to homes and businesses by Western Union.



Undoubtedly few of these opportunities for observation and participation would have come to staff members as rapidly or naturally if the building had been ample to set up the customary services in it.

The library is at present baffled in approaching two curious problems in reading habits, those which in Montclair represent deliberate efforts at escape. Among the children, escape is widely sought in the reading of moving-picture magazines; among adults, the lecture serves the same purpose.

The Public Library in Montclair has genuine competition in the lecturers who come to town. The library offers a book which must be first selected and then read with some degree of application, alone or with one or two friends. The lecture offers the interesting and often vivid personality of the lecturer, the painlessness of listening for an hour to an able summing up of a subject, the opportunity to be part of a social group which has similar interests, the lights of the lecture hall, the conversations before and after, the inspection of interesting and fashionable evening clothes, and often refreshments in addition. Taken together these make an appeal of real importance to those who seek a little recreation and information. The borrowing of library books has not been a noticeable result of lectures in Montclair.

At the moment there is no interplay between the

Public Library and any one of the nine rental libraries, even when the books in stock are practically the same. One of these rental libraries is part of a metropolitan chain, and three others operate as parts of excellent local book-stores. The total number of books available for rental in Montclair is approximately three thousand, including one hundred and fifty for children. Since the leisurely personal service of the Montclair book-stores undoubtedly has added to the good reading done in Montclair, the Public Library has no desire to compete with the rental libraries nor with the book-shops. Eventually, however, some common meeting ground must be found.

The outstanding points for which the Montclair Library of the past decade may be criticized are two. Both are sins of omission, rather than failures to achieve after effort. First, bequests and gifts of money in a town of such wealth as Montclair have been infrequent and small. Next, the library administration has not dared to experiment with adaptations of merchandising methods nor to pioneer in professional fields except in a few minor situations where the consequences and expenses were almost negligible. Internships, for example, standing in the same relationship to the library world as medical internships to the medical profession, have not been a part of the library's personnel plan, although conditions

are favorable for an arrangement by which outstanding graduates of library schools would be sent to this library to gain experience.

Special service to commuters in the stations or on trains has been urged, but not studied. Interesting methods of inducting new users into membership have not been tried. The information service has not been surrounded with ceremony and furnishings capable of expressing the purposes and spirit of the service, such as one often finds in doctors' offices. Smart costumes such as the personnel of many concerns have adopted have not been given a trial. The various suggestions made by the telephone company for featuring certain services have been filed away, not tried out. Even such slight innovations as aluminum and chromium furniture to simplify and make the work of cleaning more effective are still untested.

What Membership in the Local Council of Social Agencies Means to the Library

THE Montclair Library takes an active part in the work of the local social-service machinery, through its two hundred and fifty dollar annual membership in the Montclair Council of Social Agencies. The library is regarded as one of the local agencies furnishing certain wholesome leisure-time services and

also as one which stresses informal adult education. In addition the library very definitely looks upon itself as the central source of book supply and statistical information from printed material for the other member agencies of the Council. From membership it receives information supplied to the library by local experts in social-service work, studies of local problems made coöperatively and furnished to the library, knowledge of local problems acquired by the library staff through formal participation in local studies and discussions, new audiences for the library's aims, personal introductions to individual social workers, volunteer service, as described in Chapter VIII, the use of the Social Service Exchange, participation in emergency work growing out of the depression.

No other single connection of the Montclair Library, not excepting the relationship with the public schools, at present enriches the work of the library as much as does this membership in the Council of Social Agencies.

❧VIII❧

Facing New Responsibilities

Challenge of local adult-education opportunities.
Broadening the scope of interloan. Coöperation for
higher standards in personnel. A widening program
and greater participation in it.

VIII

Facing New Responsibilities

The Challenge of Local Adult-education Opportunities

THE obvious needs for library service only partially met as yet in Montclair are already pressing upon the Montclair Library for attention. At bottom all are variations of coöperation with the adult-education activities in the community. Related to this large challenge is a minor one of developing library work with the foreign born and with material in foreign languages. Another need for which no solution has as yet been considered is that for a new type of library service to persons with slight ability to read. To date the Montclair Library has also taken no special cognizance of a problem of library service to negroes. The survey of negro life in New Jersey made in 1932 indicates between certain of its lines the possibility of special responsibilities which the Montclair Library must soon face. The report says:

"In every one hundred persons in Montclair, there are fifteen negroes, a ratio that is higher than

that to be found in any city having more than ten thousand population in northern New Jersey.

"The negro population of Montclair is largely a working population—furthermore it is largely a female working population.

... "This rapid increase in the negro population of a non-industrial community, as is Montclair, is certain to aggravate any existing problems and furnish additional ones during the new population's period of adjustment."

The next study to be made by a disinterested outsider for the Montclair Public Library will be a study of the need, if any, for a branch library for adults in that district largely populated by negroes and foreign born. The type of library workers needed, their race and special training, and the printed material especially suitable should receive particular emphasis. Montclair's numerous formal and informal study groups now need a special reader's adviser.

Broadening the Scope of Interloan

A SUBURBAN library may, for a long time, pride itself upon building up a book collection of importance which fits the needs of its clients. Eventually, however strong this book collection may be, the suburban library will be forced to accept the theory of interloan. For thirty years up to 1925 the library

operated as a thoroughly self-contained book collection. Whether this principle, coupled with an inadequate book fund at certain times is responsible for the presence in the community of the numerous other libraries not under Public-Library management cannot be determined. Acceptance of the necessity for engaging in interloan came at the time when extension courses for college credit were at their peak and when simultaneously the library's publicity began to bring in to the library new clients whose interest must be maintained through satisfactory service.

After interloan was accepted as a necessary part of the Montclair Library's activities, gradually through informal agreements the public libraries within the range of a five-cent telephone call came to be regarded as coöperating information agencies. The answers to many difficult information questions were asked of the neighboring public libraries. Books which could be obtained quickly were borrowed and loaned under few restrictions. Short cuts in the process of bringing a distant book to an ordinary borrower or inquirer continued to be evolved, until interloan has gradually invaded even the area of information work.

Need for participation in a regional interloan scheme increases almost automatically with the num-

ber of indexes for library use which are published and added to a suburban library's collection. The compiling of a record of regional ownership of certain groups of books is inevitable among suburban library neighbors which are stressing rapid service. For example, the information librarians of the vicinity are now working together on a list of indexes in addition to Granger which will be marked to show the joint holdings of the neighborhood libraries in the plan as well as the holdings of one's own library.

The interloan of miscellaneous volumes on a large scale was pushed by the Montclair Library steadily for two years, and daily automobile service to neighboring libraries was part of the machinery. The enterprise, however, languished. Among the explanations given for the failure of the service to grow have been these:

The New Jersey Public Library Commission service, until recent budget reductions were exacted, has been very generally adequate.

Such elaborate attempts at satisfaction to borrowers is beyond the capacities of the present limited library staffs.

The period of loan has been too long, especially when current titles were borrowed.

The privilege has been abused by unscrupulous bor-

rowers, especially by persons hard pressed by the required reading of extension courses. Messenger follow-ups on such borrowers in another town are next to impossible.

Clerical work involved is elaborate and costly. Simpler mechanical methods, such as the use of the telautograph, need to be found.

Results have been too slow. Often no final report to the borrower has been made until two weeks have elapsed when a report in 6-12 hours would be reasonable.

In general any book analyzed in an accepted bibliography such as *The Essay Index* or the *Index to Plays* is a legitimate request for interloan from a neighboring library. The locating of the majority of such books can be made a matter of only a few minutes by simple substitutes for a union shelf list. Any book listed in a generally accepted and fairly popular reference work (such as *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *Dictionary of American Biography*, *Encyclopædia of the Social Sciences*, *Statesman's Year Book*, and *Social Work Year Book*) is also a legitimate request for interloan, provided, of course, that the titles cited are not reference books vital to the holding library's information service. An unfilled request for a foreign book of any merit should be followed by an effort to borrow a copy of the book from a

near-by library or from a private citizen who owns foreign books.

A neighboring librarian has suggested that each public library in this vicinity agree to preserve or specialize in the storage of the works of certain popular authors of the past, still called for. It has also been suggested that reservoirs should be set up in libraries such as the State Library or the most important library of the region for all out-of-print novels mentioned in standard guides such as *Baker* and the *Wilson Fiction Catalog*. The library formerly owning these volumes could then borrow any book in the reservoir.

A development of interloan which would appear to be not far distant is a union warehouse of books which are now stored in countless nooks and corners of the suburban libraries owning them. Suburban libraries in this vicinity are constantly lamenting their lack of room. A joint storage space, from which books required could be extracted daily and to which books could be added when their popularity wore off, probably would be a cheaper method than is used at present. For example, duplicate copies of novels which surely will appear in the movies later could be placed there and then withdrawn on a day's notice, as the films are booked by local theaters. Replacement costs in one library might be eliminated in

part by the use of these duplicate books. Uncatalogued gifts also could be pooled and used as an interloan reservoir. As a circulation department assistant recently observed: "Not long ago I saw five copies of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* in the basement of another suburban library. I went back to my own library and found we had only one, so decrepit that a borrower would hesitate to take it down from the shelf."

If suburban libraries could agree and could obtain the finances necessary, a considerable saving, when saving is considered as a total, might be brought about by adopting the practice of city libraries for their branches in establishing a reservoir operated on a daily interloan plan. The book stocks on open shelves might thus be reduced with consequent saving in maintenance and in the equivalent of rent.

A single music collection truly adequate to the existing demands in this vicinity for reference and lending service should be established and maintained coöperatively.

Recent developments in science may suggest other possible solutions for problems involved in reciprocity and a joint use of records of borrowers. Here are problems for specialists and scientists in our suburban communities to work upon, as individual contributions to their own community institutions.

Coöperation for Higher Standards in Personnel

THE experience of the Montclair Library with the simple forms of coöperation with its neighbors in which it has already engaged makes the members of its professional library staff believe that there is much to be gained in almost any coöperative effort with neighboring libraries. It is not argued that the gain will be in lessened total expenditures, but in such economies in operation as will enable libraries to render better service and more extensive service for the same expenditure.

The Montclair Library recognizes that its place in the locality is tied up very definitely with the plans and ideals of the New Jersey Public Library Commission. The future for the Montclair Library holds no immediate prospect of becoming a part of a larger local government unit composed of Montclair and immediately surrounding districts. Instead, any regional coördination will be a matter of informal agreement.

Toward such coördination various regional meetings are now arranged in the vicinity of Montclair for assistants who work in similar departments of libraries. At present they are purposely informal, as is indicated by the titles under which they operate, the *Circ Circle* made up of circulation assistants,

New Jersey Juveniles who are the children's librarians of northern New Jersey, *The Suburban Librarians* who are the chief administrative officers of the libraries in the immediate vicinity of Newark. The reference and information assistants of the vicinity also hold regular scheduled meetings. Although loosely organized, these meetings are genuinely valuable for they call the attention of librarians in the smaller libraries to the latest and best in professional movements and standards, not to mention all sorts of news items and devices for better and simpler library techniques. They also make possible more contacts with the New Jersey Public Library Commission at less cost to every one concerned.

With the present volume of work at the Montclair Library and the present number of its staff members, there are certain duties, which are not performed with any regularity, but which wait, if they can be postponed, until there can be a major house cleaning for that particular project. There are still tasks on which no one is working with any degree of regularity, or with the feeling on any one's part that the work is being performed as it should be. In these cases and in the cases where a clerical worker does one task very well for a part of her working week and does not work so well at a second task, there are opportunities for libraries to coöperate

when they are close together geographically. When the same kind of mechanical or clerical work is repeated in a sufficient number of neighboring libraries, the work could be done by one library for the others either on a pro-rata basis, or by some form of contract, more cheaply than it is now being done. Opportunity would then be given for professional workers in suburban libraries to spend more time on developing reading guidance and in tying up the library more closely with community activities.

With the more general introduction of machines into the library work, and with cheap and rapid automobile transportation for staff members, for cards, and for books, this joint purchase of certain services by neighboring suburban libraries may possibly come into being in the not distant future. For example, an expert binding supervisor and a book mender traveling from library to library could handle the work of several libraries economically. One publicity worker shared by four or five suburban libraries could handle and coördinate the publicity of these libraries. A reference assistant shared by several smaller libraries is also a possibility. Lack of cost data may explain why the proposals for coöperative undertakings by libraries in the vicinity have not been more frequent.

Whenever cost studies are published where vari-



ables have been eliminated and where the installation of mechanical devices has been demonstrated by another library to be efficient and cheap, the Montclair Library imitates these methods. Gradually, by imitating its neighbors and experimenting itself with new machines, the Montclair Library hopes to arrive at the cheapest form of operation possible for clerical and mechanical tasks. The Montclair Library, however, cannot arrive through imitation alone at the steady improvement of standards of work, at steady professional improvement of members of the staff, at increased enthusiasm of each staff member for her work and at ever increasing knowledge of correct theory and sound modern methods on the part of each and every member of the library staff. For the suburban librarian and particularly the chief librarian, attendance at a national conference, and at other occasional conferences through the year, is not sufficient inspiration to help her to become the proper type of leader at home the rest of the year. She needs to be part of a local group which is working steadily and formally on local problems, with the background of sound theory always emphasized. At present there is no library nor library school where a picked group of suburban chief librarians can go together for a week each year and observe the latest practices and discuss them with their peers.

*Children who own no books learn
at the library to use and love them.*

Present conferences are too vague for this purpose and have no laboratory facilities. Planning for libraries on a state-wide scale bids fair to develop into the richest professional experience yet offered to suburban librarians.

A Widening Program and Wider Participation in It

THE principle of "lay participation" in the work of the library has been accepted widely by libraries as far as activities by organized groups of citizens in behalf of libraries are concerned. Turning to Parent Teacher Associations, to the League of Women Voters, to service clubs, for example, for opportunities to explain the library's position is a commonplace practice.

A formal organization of individuals each working to interpret the library and to advance some definite project of the library is also regarded by numerous libraries as a desirable undertaking for the Board and librarian jointly as part of a long-time program. In Montclair the Library Citizens Committee and the Junior League's group of young women who work entirely on library problems are examples of this second type of lay participation, now commonly designated as "Friends of the Library."

The individual volunteer as a desirable comple-

ment to the library's regular work has not as yet gained acceptance in library circles, although many social-service agencies are using laymen in this way to mutual advantage. Records of the use in libraries of talents found in the community are not easy to locate. In Montclair, however, the library has drifted into this third type of "lay participation" because of its participation in the Montclair Council of Social Agencies, which has the use of able volunteers as one of its policies. Members of the Council generally hold that by this method genuine talents which might otherwise be wasted are salvaged for the community and that the volunteer, while given opportunity to learn about the community, is at the same time enabled to make a real contribution to the town's welfare.

The Montclair Library's experience with more than sixty volunteers of varying ability leads it to believe that in a suburban community of this size and character there is a definite place for the volunteer in the public library's plan. Many suburban residents can afford to work part time or irregularly without compensation and are happy to give to the community volunteer service which ties up with books and their own reading. As a result of participation and observation, the volunteer becomes an active interpreter of the library's resources and

policies. His or her interpretations are accepted by acquaintances as being unprejudiced by the presence of a pay check. The volunteer tends to bring gifts to the library and to secure other gifts for the library. Among volunteers who have served in the Montclair Library are national authorities in their special lines of work who gave freely of their services as they would to any other community enterprise in Montclair in which they were seriously interested.

The library should have an appeal to many other Montclair specialists and experts. Just as the Montclair Community Chest now receives the benefit of counsel from citizens who are national advertising experts, so should the scientists in the community, for example, be enlisted by the library to discover new uses for developments in their particular fields which would enable the library to improve its performance appreciably. Certain groups might well undertake studies of local reading habits.

The results of scientific invention have barely penetrated the library field, chiefly because libraries have offered only relatively small markets. Salesmen have not found it noticeably profitable to point out the applications of their wares to libraries and so have not introduced into library work many products and machines which would be of great value there. It remains for the interested volunteer to work out

adaptations of his own specialty for use in his town library.

In the coöperation with an organization such as the Junior League it might easily be possible, for example, to make an original contribution to the field of exhibits in public libraries. As another illustration of opportunities for service developed jointly with outside agencies, the special library work now carried on with the children of the out-patient department of one of the Montclair hospitals may be an instance of an undertaking capable of much wider development.

In the work now being conducted jointly by volunteers and the Montclair Library in the Mountainside Hospital there is opportunity to carry on an interesting and valuable study, the necessity for which would be indicated by the hospital librarians' section of the American Library Association.

Any program for future endeavor at the Montclair Library must preclude all possibility of riding professional hobbies or of dreaming dreams. Any plan must deal with the immediate future and must face the taking on of greater responsibilities. The primary responsibility is to locate the needs at present unmet. By virtue of the fact that the public library is a tax-supported institution, its future program must also be concerned with economical

administration as well as service. Its financial responsibilities, therefore, must be predicated upon two axioms. The first is the need to bring about better methods of financing the Library. Better methods of financing the Montclair Library may mean: cheaper ways to operate, better ways to obtain support, more adequate support if any expansion of responsibilities seems justified, or a combination of any two or of all these financial methods. The second is the necessity of discovering library activities which are duplicated in the Montclair area and then of co-operating to provide complementary instead of duplicating service.

The suburban library's present strength lies in the human, interested approach of its librarians to the patrons, each of whom, after all, has an individual problem and a specific need. What made the predecessor of to-day's suburban library the force it was in the early days of the community, was a genuine affection for the library on the part of many of its users. They regarded themselves as active friends and advisers, as distinguished from mere clients. In the process of development and growth from a small town library to one of regional services, care must be taken not to allow this valuable reciprocal interest to lapse for want of opportunities. It is the function of the librarians having public relations to

develop such a consciousness with the patron that the library may frequently become the beneficiary of the patron's interest and generosity.

The library staff which meets the public must understand the vital part it plays in assisting trustees to obtain larger library budgets from the appropriating body. The more the library's users are conscious that the library is a vital institution in their lives, the easier it becomes for the trustees to obtain tax support sufficient to provide the services which the taxpayers and other patrons use and value. Without such a public acceptance of the library in the community, public officials can scarcely be expected, in considering the library budget, to have a sympathetic acceptance of increased services involving larger tax support.

APPENDIX

Library Documents

Policies of organization and administration. Services, leaves, vacations, and sickness rulings in the Montclair Public Library. Principles of book buying for adults. Revised working agreement between Board of Education and Board of Trustees, Montclair. Job analysis. Costs of departments for 1935. Budget data, 1936. Monthly reconciliation of appropriation and expenses with budget. Findings of the Ranck Survey, 1931.

MONTCLAIR FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY

Policies of Organization and Administration

THE Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library believes that the best interests of the community will be served by setting forth in definite form a statement of the underlying principles and policies of the organization and administration of the library.

It further believes that it is advisable and necessary to set up rules and regulations governing the services of members of the library staff, and to establish a system of salary schedules, including leaves of absences.

The Board of Trustees:

The Trustees are appointed by the Mayor for a term of five years. The term of office of one trustee expires annually.

The Trustees give their services without recompense of any kind other than the satisfaction of knowing that they have made a contribution to the well-being of this community.

The responsibilities of the Trustees are to determine the policy of the library, to promote its service, and to secure adequate funds to carry on its work satisfactorily.

The Librarian:

The librarian shall be the chief executive of the Board of Trustees and as such shall be responsible for the administration of the Public Library under the general policies approved by said Board of Trustees. She shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board to the community.

The librarian shall attend all meetings of the Board and shall have the right to speak on all subjects under discussion, but shall not have the right to vote.

The librarian shall have charge of all properties belonging to the library and shall be responsible for the proper discharge of duties by all members of the staff.

All communications or petitions from the employees to the Board of Trustees shall be transmitted through the librarian, who shall have the right of recommendation prior to consideration by the Board of Trustees.

No one shall be appointed to the library staff except upon the recommendation of the librarian.

All promotions shall be recommended by the librarian.

Transfers, assignment of duties, fixing hours of service, and similar matters shall rest with the librarian.

SERVICE, LEAVES, VACATIONS, AND SICKNESS RULINGS IN THE MONTCLAIR PUBLIC LIBRARY

Service

NORMAL working conditions in the Montclair Public Library are in general those of the standard set by the more liberal large libraries. The rules in effect April, 1930, in regard to service, vacations, leaves, and sickness are as follows:

Hours

Members of the staff who qualify as librarians work not more than five days a week.

The maximum number of hours required is forty.

A full hour each for dinner and for lunch is compulsory. Drop days are neither required nor permitted. Short lunch hours are neither required nor permitted.

For assistants required to be on duty at night the working day ordinarily begins at one o'clock and ends at nine with one full hour for dinner. Although seven hours is the actual time the assistant works, this time is counted in the assistant's schedule as being eight full hours of service.

Holidays

The library is closed on Sundays.

The library is closed on the holidays legal in New Jersey. These are New Year's Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, General Election Day, Armistice Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day. Only in very exceptional circumstances has an

assistant been asked to work on days when the library is closed.

The library is closed every Saturday afternoon during July and August and on the Saturday immediately preceding Labor Day.

The library closes at six o'clock on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings during July and August.

Vacations

Each member of the professional and clerical staff who has been eleven months in the service receives a vacation of thirty working days (Sundays and holidays excluded).

Full-time professional workers, who have been five years in the service and who plan to continue therein, receive three months' additional vacation with pay for travel outside the United States or for formal study.

Full-time assistants in the service more than a year who resign in good and regular standing receive payment for the vacation due. Such vacation time is calculated on the basis of two and a half working days for each month of service since January 1st of the current year.

Provision in Case of Sickness

The library carries employers' liability as required by the New Jersey State law including insurance against accidents, to the edge of the library sidewalk, and in addition carries accident insurance on occupants of the library car.

Sickness is covered by a cumulative sick plan, based

on a seventy-five working-day maximum over a term of five years.

No member of the staff while suffering with a contagious disease (including a cold in its contagious stage) may report for duty.

Pensions

The library has no pension plan inasmuch as the present New Jersey pension law does not include librarians.

Educational Program

One full day a year is granted and is compulsory for the visiting of other libraries.

When the public business permits, time is granted to travel to and from, and to attend library conferences. The library budget contains an item for partial payment of expenses to assistants selected to attend a library conference.

Time to attend the State Summer Library School or other approved library school is paid in full by the library to an assistant who attends the course, provided the schedule of the library permits such attendance. To such an assistant the library will pay an additional week's vacation.

Time is given assistants to attend courses and lectures and other meetings at any time during the year, tending to improve their professional advancement or standing.

Leaves without pay are granted for study or travel by the Board, on recommendation of the librarian, for definite periods fixed ahead of time.

PRINCIPLES OF BOOKBUYING FOR ADULTS IN THE MONTCLAIR PUBLIC LIBRARY

Principle in Selection of Books for Adults

THAT the library shall constitute the central intelligence of the town not only for 'polite' literature but for every commercial and vocational field of information that it may prove practical to enter. In addition, that the library will be in close working connection with towns and cities where such collections exist as the library itself does not have, and where answers to questions, photostat copies of reference material, and books on loan can be speedily received at a trifling fee.—Based on "The American Public Library and the Diffusion of Knowledge," by William S. Learned.

Principles in Proportioning the Book Fund

In determining the amount of money needed for the different classes of books each year, consideration is given first to the size and quality of the present collection, then to the probable demands of the coming year.

Discounts

The Montclair Library's principle in the matter of "bargains" is that it is no better economy to buy books merely because they are cheap than it is to buy articles in a bargain basement merely because they are marked down in price. Such purchases of books are made only when there is definite need at the library for the books.

Book Values

The Montclair Library has a qualified book buyer who is acquainted with the demands of the community, knows the book resources of the library, and chooses (within the limits of the annual book budget) the variety of books she believes will be used.

Mechanics of Book Selection

The librarian who selects the books is assisted in her work by the use of bibliographic tools and dependable advance book reviews written for the guidance of libraries.

Besides attempting to meet popular demands from the community, she strives to meet and anticipate the requirements of the minority groups of the community as the Economics Forum, the Free Time Guild, the social workers, and the foreign element.

The librarian who selects the books is also aided in her work by recommendations of the staff members who come in direct contact with the public. They discover gaps in the library's book collection as shown by the demands of the public for subjects the library has not yet covered. She also gives regard to opinions of local authorities on the worth-whileness of books on special subjects, such as religious books, technical books, social service, etc.

Duplicate Copies of Novels

The duplicate copies purchased for the Montclair Library are based at present upon the principle of one

additional copy of a book for every five reserves on hand. A book is not reserved at a cost of ten cents unless it is really wanted. The Montclair Library believes that it is better to make available many copies of one good popular title than it is to buy several titles for which there is only slight demand and which are of only passing interest.

MEMORANDUM OF REVISED WORKING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY RELATIVE TO PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE RENDERED THROUGH SUB-BRANCHES AND/OR DEPOSIT STATIONS LOCATED IN THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN MONTCLAIR

Effective January 1, 1936

WHEN deemed advisable and upon the approval of both parties to this agreement, sub-branches and/or deposit stations or other types of service stations of the Public Library shall be established in the elementary schools, the supervision of the library work in such sub-branches or other types of stations to be under the Supervisor of Children's Work in the Public Library; provided, however, that any extension of the school library service over and above that provided by the Public Library at the time this agreement is signed shall be at the request of the Board of Education.

It is to be understood that the school librarians or part-time librarians assigned to the schools shall be regarded as members of the school faculty while on duty in the school buildings and shall work in coöperation with the principals of the schools as well as the Supervisor of Children's Work in the Public Library.

All expenses incurred as hereinafter defined in this coöperative scheme shall be equally borne by the two parties to this contract.

Articles

1. Public Library service stations in the schools may be in the form of sub-branches, deposit stations, or other types of service mutually agreed upon.

A sub-branch is a branch of the Public Library in which the hours of opening do not necessarily approximate those of the central library nor of the public schools. Such sub-branches, however, shall operate within the period when the school building is open for normal school services.

Deposit stations in school buildings consist of small collections of books (from two hundred to several hundred) sent for an indefinite period of time. The collections are frequently changed, although the station has some permanency. A deposit station may be in charge of an assistant sent from the central library or a library branch.

2. It is agreed that those who are assigned to do library work in the schools by the Public Library shall, as nearly as possible, conform to the standards required for teaching service. In the future, the selection and assignment of school librarians from the Public Library shall be mutually agreed upon by the librarian and the Superintendent of Schools.

3. Previous to the establishment of a Public-Library service station in a school building, all books at the time in the school (with the exception of textbooks and sets or parts of sets of supplementary books) shall be concentrated by the school authorities in the proposed library room in readiness for rehabilitation and weeding out,

looking toward a better blending with the proposed new Public-Library book collection.

The matter of discards or modifications of the collection in the interest of making it the best possible working collection between the Public Library and the school shall be determined by joint recommendation made by the principal concerned and the Supervisor of Children's Work in the Public Library.

4. The Board of Education may employ on its own account librarians or clerks in the school service stations in the schools in addition to those functioning at the time of this agreement, but such additional personnel shall be wholly at the expense of the Board of Education, and such personnel shall be required, in the interest of coördinated effort, to work under the direction of the Supervisor of Children's Work in the Public Library.

5. The Public Library shall carry insurance to cover its books and equipment in the school service stations, but one-half the cost of this insurance shall be borne by the Board of Education.

6. The spirit of this agreement shall be such that matters not concerned with a change in policy or finance or extension of service shall be worked out by the principals and the Supervisor of Children's Work in the Public Library.

7. It is understood and agreed that the annual amount of book purchases for the school service stations, and also titles, shall be mutually agreed upon by the librarian and the Superintendent of Schools.

8. It is understood and agreed that the school service stations are not to be open to the general public except

at such time and such place as will not interfere with the main object of these stations, namely, to serve the pupils and the faculty.

9. Necessary purchases of permanent equipment such as shelving, filing cases, etc., shall be selected with the approval of the librarian and shall be made by the Board of Education, whose property it becomes. Space, heat, light, and janitor service will be provided by the Board of Education.

10. All permanent supplies and forms needed shall be uniform with the Public Library requirements and shall be supplied by the Public Library as provided for in 11 *d* below.

11. Under this agreement, and under any later extension of service under this agreement which does not require a change in fundamental policy, each party to this contract shall bear half of the allocated costs. Such allocated costs shall include:

a. Salaries of the librarians assigned to the schools in proportion to the time they spend in the school service.

b. A reasonable payment for library supervision of the elementary-school branches, which is fixed, under this agreement, at five hundred dollars (\$500) annually.

c. Messenger service, automobile depreciation, car insurance, running expenses of automobiles actually incurred in connection with the operation of school stations, and general insurance on permanent Public Library equipment kept in the school buildings and belonging to the Library Board. And,

d. The allocated costs shall further include the purchase of books as agreed upon in Article 7 for such service stations, periodicals, binding of books, cataloguing and all necessary supplies.

The total cost of these allocated items, including the five hundred dollars (\$500) for supervisory service rendered by the Public Library, shall be borne equally by the two parties to this contract.

12. This revised agreement shall be subject to revision, amendment, or modification upon appropriate action by both parties to it, and to cancellation by action of either party.

MONTCLAIR FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Job Analysis

PROFESSIONAL

Total Salaries in 1935, \$31,966

Librarian

Administration

Head of acquisition

Book buying, supervision of cataloguing, publicity, head of office work, purchasing agent, discarding, binding

Head of work with adults

Supervision of reference and circulation work, records

Head of children's work

Buyer of children's books, supervision of all children's work in school branches and Main and Bellevue Avenue Branch, branch librarian

Reference assistant (3)

Information service, preparation of reading lists, bibliography, reference work

Reference assistant

Cataloguing, reference

Children's librarian

Children's work at Main and Edgemont, reference assistant at Main

Circulation assistant

Circulation work, picture files

Circulation assistant

Circulation, reference

School librarian

Work with school children (circulation and reference)

School librarian

Work with school children (circulation and reference)

School librarian

Work with school children (circulation and reference), interloan, circulation, reference

Supervising assistant

Building, repair, charge of E.R.A. workers, general supervising

Head of cataloguing

Cataloguing, classification, subject heading, supervision

Junior cataloguer

Cataloguing, circulation, reference, switchboard

Permanent substitute

Circulation, reference, cataloguing, children's work

SUB-PROFESSIONAL

Total Salaries in 1935, \$5,160

Circulation assistant (4)

Circulation

Circulation assistant

Circulation, cataloguing assistant, filing

CLERICAL

Total Salaries in 1935, \$3,972

Switchboard assistant

Telephone operator, typing for circulation and reference departments

Secretary

Records, financial and administration secretary

Office clerk

Typing for administration, reference, circulation

PLANT PERSONNEL

Total Salaries in 1935, \$4,554

Shelver and messenger

Closing Bellevue Branch, post office delivery, shelving, messenger, chauffeur, branch deliveries, storage work, minor work with books

Shelver, Main Library

Shelving books and periodicals, messenger, page service

Shelver, Bellevue Branch

Shelving books and periodicals, messenger, page service, closing building

Supply clerk

Care of incoming and outgoing supplies, inventory of supplies, receipt of incoming book shipments

Janitor, Main Library

Cleaning, minor repairs, messenger to bank, supervision of branch janitor and storage

Janitor, Bellevue Branch

Cleaning, messenger

Night Janitor

Cleaning, closing main building, part time

Gardener, Main Library

Caring for lawn and garden, part time

Gardener, Bellevue Branch

Caring for lawn and garden, part time

GOVERNMENT-SUBSIDIZED WORKERS

Total Salaries in 1935, \$7,176

SUB-PROFESSIONAL

Reader's adviser for fiction

Filing, clerical, typing

Author's entry, verifying editions, filing, typing

CLERICAL

Shelving, filing cards, mounting pictures

Typing catalogue cards (2)

Marking numbers on books, signs

Circulation, hospital

Accessioning, pasting, filing

Messenger, storage, branch deliveries

COST OF DEPARTMENTS FOR 1935

| | <i>Circulation</i> 36% | <i>Reference</i> 39% | <i>Children's Work</i> 25% | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Direct personnel | \$6,775 | \$7,235 | \$4,674 | \$18,684 |
| General personnel | 9,924 | 10,752 | 6,892 | 27,568 |
| Plant and operation | 3,879 | 4,202 | 2,693 | 10,774 |
| Stock | 5,461 | 5,916 | 3,793 | 15,170 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | \$26,039 | \$28,105 | \$18,052 | \$72,196 |

In apportioning these costs the job analyses (pages 154-157) were used as a basis.

Direct personnel includes all those whose work lay wholly within the functions of each department. If divided between two or more departments, estimated hours per week formed the basis for corresponding apportionment of pay roll. The total pay roll of direct personnel for each department was compared with the grand total for direct personnel to form percentages for the allocation of the other general classifications of cost. These percentages were found to be Circulation 36 per cent, Reference 39 per cent, Children's Work 25 per cent.

General personnel comprises all those whose supervisory, clerical, or plant-operation time could not be definitely allocated to departments, being devoted to general library functions.

Plant and operation carries the items of furniture and fixtures, fuel, electricity and water, insurance, cleaning supplies, repairs, auto purchase and storage, auto depreciation, transportation, and telephone.

Stock includes books and binding, periodicals, fixed

recurring charges (mostly association memberships bringing in periodical publications), and supplies.

No item in the budget was excluded from this distribution of costs.

In larger libraries the departmental allocation might be more accurately weighted with the factor of space occupied. Thus voluminous stacks might carry more plant and operation cost. If special departments exist the same technique for cost finding may be applied.

MONTCLAIR LIBRARY—RECONCILIATION OF TOWN

Month of September 30, 1935

| INCOME | 1935 Budget | Actual To Date |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Town appropriation | \$56,800.00 | \$53,956.26 |
| Board of Education | 1,396.00 | ..... |
| Reserve Fund—estimated | 14,000.00 | 14,000.00 |
| Total | <u>\$72,196.00</u> | <u>\$67,956.26</u> |

| EXPENSES | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| *Books and Binding | 11,020.00 | 8,174.22 |
| Depreciation of Automobile | 150.00 | 150.00 |
| Fixed Recurring Charges | 500.00 | 403.63 |
| Furniture and Equipment | 800.00 | 489.09 |
| Heat, Light, and Water | 1,750.00 | 1,348.22 |
| *Insurance | 428.00 | 452.56 |
| Janitor Supplies | 200.00 | 197.02 |
| *Periodicals | 1,200.00 | 987.66 |
| Personnel—49,946 less refund 3,894 to town | 46,052.00 | 34,221.31 |
| Postage | 450.00 | 322.90 |
| Repairs | 5,046.00 | 4,292.06 |
| Storage | 1,000.00 | 620.35 |
| Supplies | 2,450.00 | 1,415.87 |
| Telephone | 650.00 | 448.72 |
| Transportation | 500.00 | 323.67 |
| Total | <u>\$72,196.00</u> | <u>\$53,847.28</u> |
| Balance at End of Period | | \$14,108.98 |

* Seasonal Purchases.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENSES WITH BUDGET

| Balance Available | Comparison | | Comparison | |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 1/12 Budget | Current Month | Budget To Date | Actual To Date |
| \$2,843.74 | \$4,733.00 | \$5,557.86 | \$42,597.00 | \$53,956.26 |
| 1,396.00 | 116.00 | ..... | 1,044.00 | ..... |
| ..... | 1,167.00 | 13,607.00 | 10,503.00 | 14,000.00 |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| \$4,239.74 | \$6,016.00 | \$19,164.86 | \$54,144.00 | \$67,956.26 |
| | Over Budget | 13,148.86 | Over Budget | 13,812.26 |
| 2,845.78 | 918.00 | 687.74 | 8,262.00 | 8,174.22 |
| ..... | 13.00 | ..... | 117.00 | 150.00 |
| 96.37 | 42.00 | 1.00 | 378.00 | 403.63 |
| 310.91 | 67.00 | 4.92 | 603.00 | 489.09 |
| 401.78 | 148.00 | 79.10 | 1,314.00 | 1,348.22 |
| -24.56 | 36.00 | ..... | 324.00 | 452.56 |
| 2.98 | 17.00 | 17.55 | 153.00 | 197.02 |
| 212.34 | 100.00 | 9.04 | 900.00 | 987.66 |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| 11,830.69 | 3,837.00 | 3,837.80 | 34,533.00 | 34,221.31 |
| 127.10 | 37.00 | 51.40 | 333.00 | 322.90 |
| 753.94 | 420.00 | 633.68 | 3,780.00 | 4,292.06 |
| 379.65 | 83.00 | 21.00 | 747.00 | 620.35 |
| 1,034.13 | 204.00 | 76.19 | 1,836.00 | 1,415.87 |
| 201.28 | 54.00 | 47.51 | 486.00 | 448.72 |
| 176.33 | 42.00 | 90.93 | 378.00 | 323.67 |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| \$18,348.72 | \$6,016.00 | \$5,557.86 | \$54,144.00 | \$53,847.28 |
| | Under Budget | 458.14 | Under Budget | 296.72 |

MONTCLAIR PUBLIC LIBRARY—BUDGET FOR 1936

| A. PERSONNEL | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| | Budget '33 | Budget '34 | Budget '35 | Budget '36 | |
| 1. Professional | \$28,816.00 | \$28,816.00 | \$31,966.00 | \$31,966.00 | |
| 2. Sub-professional | 5,160.00 | 5,160.00 | 5,160.00 | 5,160.00 | |
| 3. Clerical | 3,972.00 | 3,972.00 | 3,972.00 | 3,972.00 | |
| 4. Internships | ..... | ..... | ..... | 900.00 | |
| 5. Assistant emeritus | ..... | ..... | 600.00 | 600.00 | |
| 6. Plant personnel | 4,204.00 | 4,204.00 | 4,554.00 | 5,230.00 | |
| Sub-totals | \$42,152.00 | \$42,152.00 | \$46,252.00 | \$47,828.00 | |
| B. PLANT AND MAINTENANCE | | | | | |
| 1. Furniture and fixtures | 600.00 | 600.00 | 800.00 | 600.00 | |
| 2. Fuel, electricity, water | 1,750.00 | 1,750.00 | 1,750.00 | 2,040.00 | |
| 3. Insurance | 420.00 | 428.00 | 428.00 | 439.00 | |
| 4. Cleaning supplies | 200.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | |
| 5. Repairs | 1,000.00 | 1,350.00 | 5,046.00 | 1,000.00 | |
| 6. Auto depreciation | 150.00 | 150.00 | 150.00 | 250.00 | |
| 7. Postage | 550.00 | 450.00 | 450.00 | 450.00 | |
| 8. Telephone | 500.00 | 600.00 | 650.00 | 650.00 | |
| 9. Transportation | 370.00 | 370.00 | 500.00 | 500.00 | |
| 10. Auto purchase | 605.00 | ..... | ..... | ..... |  |
| 11. Storage | ..... | ..... | 800.00 | ..... |  |
| Sub-totals | \$6,145.00 | \$5,898.00 | \$10,774.00 | \$6,129.00 | |

C. STOCK

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Books and Binding | 12,000.00 | 11,750.00 | 11,020.00 | 11,000.00 |
| 2. Periodicals | 1,250.00 | 1,200.00 | 1,200.00 | 1,200.00 |
| 3. Fixed recurring charges | 500.00 | 500.00 | 500.00 | 500.00 |
| 4. Supplies | 1,950.00 | 2,200.00 | 2,450.00 | 1,950.00 |
| Sub-totals | \$15,700.00 | \$15,650.00 | \$15,170.00 | \$14,650.00 |
| Grand Totals | \$63,997.00 | \$63,700.00 | \$72,196.00 | \$68,607.00 |

ANTICIPATED INCOME

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|
| D. TOWN APPROPRIATION | Income '33 | Income '34 | Income '35 | Requested Income '36 |
| 1. Balance January 1 | \$62,351.00 | \$43,304.00 | \$56,800.00 | \$64,339.44 |
| 2. Auto Fund | 114.77 | | | |
| 3. Bank interest | 250.00 | | | |
| | 30.00 | | | |
| E. BOARD OF EDUCATION | 1,396.00 | 1,396.00 | 1,396.00 | 4,267.56 |
| F. TRUSTEE FUNDS | | 19,000.00 | 14,000.00 | |
| Total | \$64,141.77 | \$63,700.00 | \$72,196.00 | \$68,607.00 |

THE FINDINGS OF THE RANCK SURVEY OF THE MONTCLAIR FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

FOUR YEARS AFTER

At the request of the Trustees of the Montclair Free Public Library in October, 1926, Mr. Samuel Ranck, Librarian of the Grand Rapids Public Library, made a survey of the Montclair Free Public Library with a view to extending the usefulness of the institution.

The survey's recommendations are set off by quotations in the sheets which follow.

The progress which has been made in each department since October, 1926, is set forth below the specific recommendation.

The information used is that of December 31, 1930, unless otherwise dated.

The Trustees and Their Function

"The Board should be the legislative body, determining the policy of the library, representing the community in making the library an effective educational agency for all the people. The librarian should be the executive officer of the Board, making its policies effective and the library an efficient agency for the purposes for which it was established."

A statement covering the relation of the Board of Trustees to the Librarian and to the members of the staff and also the relation of the Librarian to the staff has been drawn up.

A multigraphed copy of this statement of policy has been given to each Board member and to each member of the library staff.

This statement has had a considerable circulation among librarians.

Financing

"The great service the Board can perform for the library, and much better than the librarian can do it, is to see to it that the library is properly financed (assuming that the professional work inside the library is what it ought to be), and that the city authorities who levy the taxes place the proper amounts in the city budget to enable the library to do its work effectively."

Adequate financing commenced with the next Town Budget after Mr. Ranck's Survey.

The total Library budget increased from \$34,430.19 in 1926 to \$73,468.76 in 1930.

"Considering the wealth of Montclair your library is not well supported financially. Your total expenditures for maintenance (the regular expenses of the library including the purchase of books) are something less than a dollar per capita of the population served, the minimum support that a public library should receive."

Maintenance per capita 1926 \$.79

Maintenance per capita 1930 \$1.76

The Staff

"One of the first things that will be necessary to bring your library up to a high standard of efficiency will be to get people on your staff who in educational equipment and professional training will rank with your teachers in the high schools and the grades. This does not mean by any means that you should dismiss your present staff."

1926 staff

13 full-time; 4 part-time workers.

1931 staff:

26 full-time; 5 part-time workers.

The classification groups are: librarians, stenographers, clerks, janitors.

Salary scales for the positions were established in 1929. Educational standards were set up at the same time.

| 1926 | 1931 | | |
|------|------|---------------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | Janitors | Full time |
| 2 | 2 | Janitors | Part time |
| 12 | 15 | Librarians | Full time |
| 2 | 1 | Librarians | Part time |
| | 5 | Stenographers | Full time |
| | 4 | Clerks | Full time |
| | 2 | Clerks | Part time |

TOTAL

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 13 full | 26 full |
| 4 part time | 5 part time |

Education—College

Members on the staff having degrees from the following colleges: 6.

University of Richmond

University of Wisconsin

Bryn Mawr

North Carolina College for Women

New Jersey College for Women

Vassar

Among the many extension courses and other college courses completed by other staff members are:

1 year's attendance at the Sorbonne, in Paris.

1 year's attendance at the University of Rome.

3 years' attendance at Emory University, Atlanta.

Education—Language Equipment of Staff Members

The following foreign languages are covered:

| | | | |
|---------|-----|-----------------|---|
| French | — { | Reads | 7 |
| | | Speaks fluently | 2 |
| German | — { | Reads | 3 |
| | | | |
| Dutch | — { | Reads | 1 |
| | | Speaks fluently | 1 |
| Italian | — { | Reads | 3 |
| | | Speaks fluently | 2 |
| Spanish | — { | Reads | 1 |
| | | | |

Education—Professional Training

- A. Members of the Staff having library-school training
covering one year 13

The following schools and training classes are represented:

University of Wisconsin, Library School
Syracuse University, School of Library Service
Emory University Library School
Columbia University, School of Library Service
New York State Library School, Albany
New Jersey College for Women, Library School
Drexel Institute, School of Library Service
Brooklyn Public Library Training Class
Pratt Institute, School of Library Service
East Orange Public Library Training Class
Paris Library School, Paris, France

- B. Members of the staff having library training at
summer schools 6
- C. Members of the staff having taken business courses 7

*Report on the Present Status of Those Assistants
Whose Names Appeared on the 1926 Payroll*

Of the twelve full-time workers in 1926, ten are still on the staff. All have had at least one salary increase. Sabbatical leave of 3 months for travel abroad has been granted to three. One resigned to be married. Only one could not readjust successfully to the changes growing out of the survey.

Three of the four part-time workers (one a janitor) resigned and were later replaced by full-time workers with better training.

Of the old staff members four are now over sixty. The problem of pensions is therefore a pressing one.

Health of Staff

The health of the staff has been receiving continuous attention since 1927. The conditions under which the staff now works represents standard library practice.

Outstanding health features inaugurated since the Survey are:

A five-day week

A cumulative sick-leave plan

Regular hours for meals

Continuous hours for schedules

Shorter summer hours

No overtime

No Sunday work

No holiday work

Individual lockers

A toilet, a lunch room, and a rest room for the staff.

Problems still to be solved having to do with the health of the staff are: insurance, pensions, compulsory absence for convalescence, periodic health examinations.

The Business End of the Library

"A library in a city the size of Montclair should employ a competent person who could relieve the

librarian of all routine work so that she would have a chance to get out of her office, to know the town, its people, and its institutions."

"The routine of the business end of the library might well be simplified. This is a matter that the business men on your Board could easily work out. Every safeguard should be used in all the business affairs of the library and complete records should be kept and analyzed for the more intelligent understanding of what the library is doing and what the several aspects of its work are costing."

The financial practice of the Library has been revised and simplified by the Town Comptroller and the Town Counsel.

An itemized budget has been planned for the five-year period ending December 31, 1934.

All routine has been simplified. A simple but satisfactory record system for finances has been installed.

Other routine records of the business affairs of the Library which have been put into shape and brought up to date are:

1. Inventory of books and property
2. Survey of card catalogue
3. The substituting of Library of Congress printed cards for hand-made cards
4. The records covering registered borrowers
5. Historical records of the library, in process
6. Mailing lists made up
7. A simplified charging system installed

8. Messenger service to secure overdue books
9. Staff records set up; covering sickness, time, and the history of the individual.

Book Purchase

"The amount you spend for books should be at least doubled."

TABLE SHOWING TOTAL APPROPRIATION FOR BOOKS

| | | Including Juvenile book budgets of: |
|------|-------------|--|
| 1926 | \$ 4,353.41 | |
| 1927 | \$ 6,965.50 | |
| 1928 | \$11,530.43 | \$5,000 |
| 1929 | \$16,063.00 | \$7,000 |
| 1930 | \$13,682.00 | \$4,352 |

"Your library can never be the educational force in the community it should be with such a part of your energies and book funds going into fiction. It requires very little skill in librarianship to circulate fiction, much of it being largely mechanical in its nature. To get other classes of books largely used, as is being successfully done in many cities, requires librarians with a much wider range of knowledge and a much broader cultural background. With a proper book fund you would not decrease your use of fiction; you would simply develop the use of non-fiction."

INCREASE IN BOOK PURCHASE

| | 1926 | 1930 |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Books | \$5,363.41 | \$14,245.17 |
| Periodicals | 661.70 | 1,253.94 |

"You should certainly largely increase the number and variety of the current periodicals taken by the library for your several reading rooms, main library and branches."

The use made of current periodicals has been greatly increased by:

- (1) Subscription to the leading indexes to periodicals.
- (2) The installing of convenient storage shelves for back numbers of magazines, at a cost of approximately \$1,000.

Cost of magazine subscriptions, 1926..\$ 661.00

" " " " " 1930..\$1,253.00

To balance the heavy use of fiction we have:

1. Developed the Information work, with:
 - Four special information assistants, full time
 - Three telephone trunk lines with 15 stations, at the Main Library
 - Five telephones at the five branches.
2. Increased subscriptions to magazines from \$661.00 in 1926 to \$1,253.00 in 1930.

BOOK APPROPRIATION

Juvenile and Adult Juvenile Book Budget

| | | |
|------|-------------|------------|
| 1926 | \$ 5,353.41 | |
| 1927 | \$ 6,965.50 | |
| 1928 | \$11,530.43 | \$5,000.00 |
| 1929 | \$16,063.00 | \$7,000.00 |
| 1930 | \$13,682.00 | \$4,352.00 |

"The annual book and periodical expenditure per registered card holder is sometimes estimated as follows: 60 cents a year for books and 15 cents a year for current periodicals."

In 1930 in Montclair the total expenditure for books and periodicals per registered library-card holder was \$1.05.

Work With the Schools

"Your work with the schools should be very largely increased."

The Library's five-year program calls for one new library unit of service in a school each year. Three such units have been already set up.

The South End Branch has been moved into the Nishuane School.

A contract between the Board of Education and the Public Library to provide for coöperative service has been drawn up and put into effect.

Collections of background books for teachers and pupils have been greatly increased.

The present relations of the schools and Library are described in an article by Superintendent of Schools, Frank G. Pickell, in the May number of *The Trustees' Organ*.

The coöperation between the head of the children's work in the Library and the School supervisors and principals has grown increasingly close since 1927.

"For this work with schools you should have some one of the same caliber and educational and professional equipment as the teachers in the high school, together with the ability to speak well in public with reference to her work, as well as able to write about it interestingly. It should be the business of such a person to relate the library to the schools, and with the school work."

EQUIPMENT OF PRESENT HEAD OF THE LIBRARY'S WORK WITH SCHOOLS (APRIL 1931)

Education:

A. B. degree, Bryn Mawr College
 Certificat de presence—Sorbonne University, Paris
 Brooklyn Public Library Training Course for Children's Librarian's diploma.

Experience:

Library work at Brownsville Children's Library,
 Brooklyn, New York—2 years.

Language abilities:

Reads and speaks French and Italian, reads German.

Professional specialties:

Story hour, translation of fairy stories, cataloguing, intermediate reference work.

Travel experience:

Has been abroad twice—the first time for ten months, the second for eight weeks; has been to the Canadian rockies, all around the United States, and to Hawaii.

Borrowers' Records

"I am sure that you would not go amiss by either taking over the Newark charging system bodily, or with such slight modifications as might seem to you desirable on account of the local needs."

The simplest form of the Newark charging system has been installed. The borrower carries with him a small card somewhat similar to his automobile license.

Any book borrowed at any part of the Montclair Library system may be returned at any other point in the system, if the borrower so desires.

Delivery of books has been added to the borrowing system. Delivery is made by parcel-post, by Postal Telegraph, by the library messenger, and by the A. & P. delivery man. A messenger who spends one day a week following up overdue books was added in the fall of 1930.

The purchase of an automobile for the library makes

all these modifications simple, and greatly increases the turnover on individual volumes.

Machines and telephones have been installed to simplify and speed up the charging system.

A supervisor for all this routine was added in November, 1930.

"A unified system of registration of card holders for the whole city would be an advantage."

All the users of the library were registered, beginning in October, 1927. The writing off of names of borrowers who no longer use the library was begun systematically in October, 1930. The reader's card may be used throughout the libraries of the town.

Any book in the Montclair Library system is available to any other branch through a plan of centralized interloan. Daily interloan is made to all branches except to the Upper Montclair branch, which has two such deliveries a day.

"It is certain that your figures of registration are not true figures."

"For comparative purposes with other libraries, your method greatly pads your registration figures."

The plan used in the majority of public libraries, that of re-registering borrowers every three years, was adopted October, 1927.

Writing off began October, 1930.

A map was made in December 1930 showing the location of the residences of the fifteen thousand persons who borrow from the library.

Reference and Information Service

"You should depend on the large libraries in the immediate neighborhood for the rare and unusual reference material."

The borrowing of books has been extended beyond the branches of Montclair Library. Requests for unusual material are mailed each day to the State Library at Trenton. A messenger calls once a week at the following libraries to search for material to fill unusual requests: Newark, East Orange, Orange, Bloomfield, Glen Ridge.

In the busy season such requests have amounted to fifty a week.

The library telephone service covers all the towns in the Newark district.

"You should have, however, a good, live, working reference collection of books, one that would answer the everyday questions of the average intelligent citizen, but not an expensive research library."

Assistants giving full time to reference and information service now number four.

The telephone trunk lines now number three. Two telephone instruments are in constant use at the Information Desks.

The library has built up a large reserve collection of magazines, and subscribes to the leading indexes to these magazines.

The library has purchased the one hundred reference books considered fundamental.

The library has seven standing orders for outstanding reference material, such as the *Dictionary of American Biography*, *Hammond's loose-leaf Atlas*, and the publications of the American Library Association.

The picture collection has been expanded and revised at a cost of \$1,000. The vertical file has been expanded.

The library has derived a considerable benefit from becoming a member of the Special Libraries Association.

Codes, Rules, and Regulations

"It would be advisable for you to adopt formally a series of regulations governing the use of the library, and you should print them so that they would be uniform throughout the system."

The following regulations for borrowers have been printed:

1. "For your convenience"
2. "How to get the best possible library service"
3. "The library assistants are no longer permitted to charge"
4. Texts of the various notices for the return of overdue books have been made into form letters and postals.

"You should adopt and print regulations with reference to your staff, stating specifically your schedule of salaries, hours of work, vacations, sick leave, etc."

Staff regulations now in type are:

1. Manual of staff procedure in matters of routine; one of these in each library branch
2. Statement of staff working conditions, including illness and sabbatical leave plans
Each staff member has a personal copy. These statements are now widely requested by other libraries
3. Statement of the salary schedule now in effect.

Branch Libraries

"In my judgment your city is in immediate need of more branch libraries."

In 1926 there were two branch libraries;

1. In Upper Montclair—open from 9 to 9 daily
2. In the South End—open twenty hours a week

At the South End Branch tests of better service were made for two years; then in September, 1929, the branch was transferred to the Nishuane School. The work with children has been very greatly improved, but the use by adults has dropped off.

At the Upper Montclair Branch the children's work has been developed and is up to standard. The adult work is not yet realizing its full possibilities. In 1931,

at an expenditure of \$1,000, the Upper Montclair branch was rehabilitated physically, to the extent of 50 per cent of its needs.

There are now three public library branches in elementary schools, and a children's branch in the new Baldwin Street Community House. One-third the salary of these school librarians is paid by the Board of Education.

The Erie Railroad has promised the library adequate quarters at no cost in the proposed new Erie station.

The greatly increased use of automobiles, telephones, and delivery service, we feel, appears to do away with the need at present of more adult branch libraries.

The library's five-year program contemplated two more branch libraries in schools.

"The time is rapidly approaching when not only every high school but every grade school will have a library for school use."

At present there are three such Public-Library branches in schools. The Board of Education has established its own libraries in the junior high schools.

The five-year program provides for one new library in a grade school each year through 1934.

Regular part-time service a half day a week has been operating for a year at Edgemont School. It is planned to try out this type of service in one more school each year.

"With the branch libraries you already have you are not making the most out of them that is possible."

The Bellevue Avenue Branch is not yet realizing its possibilities in the adult department. There should be a complete reorganization of the staff. The work of this Branch had been so long decentralized that it is a slow and difficult task to knit all phases of its work closely with the Main Library for the fuller and quicker service to the public.

Future Development

"Should you decide to retain your main building at its present location, it would be advisable to get additional land adjoining as soon as possible, for your plans should provide for the possibility of enlargement beyond the present site."

A decision, after long study by the Board of Trustees was made against adding to the main building, but in favor of erecting a new main library on the same site.

Options on both adjoining properties have been secured.

"When your public realizes the kind of service that the best public libraries are giving, with a properly equipped and educated staff, the matter of finances to carry out these improvements will be, I think, the least of your troubles."

The advertising in which the library now engages regularly is varied and, in general, interesting. It appeals to a wide variety of interests. The space donated by the *Montclair Times* is exceptional in amount.

One of the most difficult problems has been to establish the professional standing of the librarians in the minds of the persons who use the library.

The findings of the Survey at the end of four years are still as fundamentally sound and are still as stimulating to the library staff and to the trustees as on the day they were first presented.

April, 1931.

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THE text of this book has been composed in 11 point Baskerville with other sizes for headings and notes. The initials and certain larger lines are in Linotype Granjon.

John Baskerville, one of England's distinguished book printers of the eighteenth century, was a successful type founder. For nearly a century and a half his beautiful Roman was lost in obscurity. The matrices had been taken to France about the time of the French Revolution and had disappeared during that period. But in 1929 a complete set of the lost characters was rediscovered in Paris. They have been reproduced in facsimile for the types used in this book.

H. L. G.

PORTRAIT OF A LIBRARY

To Help Trustees and Students of Library Work
Understand the Administrative
Problems of Libraries

By MARGERY CLOSEY QUIGLEY

Librarian

And WILLIAM ELDER MARCUS

*President, Board of Trustees, Free Public Library,
Montclair, New Jersey*

THIS compact, authoritative book presents a complete picture of a progressive, small public library. The library whose practices are described is the Montclair, New Jersey, Public Library. The authors show the modern library in its community and provide laymen, library trustees, and librarians with material for a comparison of the administration and aspirations of their own libraries with one which is among the leaders in its class. Modern library service is discussed from both the standpoint of practical financing and that of genuine value to the community. This progressive program of community coöperation will help librarians and library-school students to gain a broader perspective of library service. Useful material and specific data form the appendix. This book will provide unlimited assistance to all workers in the library field so clearly does it present the entire activity of a small library in harmony with modern ideals and practices.

Miss Quigley and Mr. Marcus have studied suburban libraries under a grant-in-aid from the Carnegie Corporation. Because of the freshness of their viewpoint, it may be truthfully said that the volume will outline new methods of approach to old problems, point out new means of service, suggest untried possibilities of coöperation, and evoke new interest and enthusiasm.